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May-June, 1959

### John Courtney Murray, S.J.

on

- Some Catholic Challenges
- · Church, State and Religious Liberty
- Religious Tensions in Our Society
- Education in Pluralist America
- God, Man and Nuclear War

REFLECTIONS ON THE RELIGIOUSLY PLURALIST SOCIETY

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#### ARTICLES AND ADDRESSES

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MAY-JUNE, 1959 VOL. LVII, No. 1143 John Courtney Murray, S.J.

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IN TTS SPECIAL NUMBER ON Christianity (December 26, 1955) Life Magazine described John Courtney Murray, S.J. as "one of U.S. Catholicism's most creative and penetrating thinkers." This issue of the Catholic Mind consists entirely of selections from the writings of this outstanding theologian.

Over the years Father Murray has addressed himself particularly to the problems which arise in a religiously pluralist society such as ours. In the following pages he discusses the special CHALLENGES CONFRONTING THE AMERICAN CATHOLIC (p. 196). In CHURCH, STATE AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY (p. 201) he approaches the difficult problem of Church-State relationships and provides an answer to the very timely question: Is there conflict between Catholic doctrine and the "no-establishment" clause of the U.S. Constitution? CHURCH, STATE AND POLITICAL FREEDOM (p. 216) shows how man's true political freedom stands or falls with the freedom of the Church. AMERICA'S FOUR CONSPIRACIES (p. 230) touches on the tensions which make for civic disunity between Catholic and Protestant. Christian and Jew and between the secularist and the "divisive forces" of religion. He suggests what is perhaps the only remedy. Two articles on education, The STATE UNIVERSITY IN A PLURALIST Society (p. 242) and The Catholic University in a Pluralist Society (p. 253), point to the responsibilities devolving on both types of school in a religiously pluralist society.

In the final two articles Father Murray takes up the extremely complicated questions involved in the foreign and military policies of this country in their relation to the character, standards and goals of the free society. The Confusion of U.S. Foreign Policy (p. 261) provides a penetrating analysis of the Soviet threat and suggests a direction for American policy. In God, Man and Nuclear War (p. 274) Father Murray applies the traditional Catholic doctrine on war to the problem of war in the nuclear age.

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The Catholic community belongs to the definition of the American way, just as the churches it has built are everywhere a characteristic feature of the landscape. So true is this that many of the challenges confronting the American Catholic are related to his very belongingness here.

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## Challenges Confronting the American Catholic

THE most searching challenges that confront the American Catholic have nothing to do with America. They are put to him inwardly by what he believes to be true—about God the Father, Christ the Son made man, the Holy Spirit, the Church as the Body of Christ, and himself as servant and son of God. There is, for instance, the injunction of St. Paul: "Order your lives in charity, upon the model of that charity which Christ shewed

to us, when He gave Himself up on our behalf . . ." It was originally issued to the people of Ephesus in the Roman province of Asia. But it is no less valid today for the people of Woodstock in the state of Maryland. It comes out of the heart of the unchanging Gospel.

However, some special challenges are put to the Catholic by his situation in America. They change as the situation changes. A century ago the major challenge took this

<sup>\*</sup>Reprinted from Life, Time Inc., 540 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill., December 26, 1955.

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form: "You don't belong here, In a Protestant America you, as a Catholic, are an alien." Within the last decade an attempt was made to raise this old refuted challenge in a somewhat less crude form: "In a democratic America your authoritarian religion is a foreign thing."

This kind of argument is outdated. Despite the perdurance of the "oldest of American prejudices," as anti-Catholicism has rightly been called, the Catholic community belongs to America just as three centuries of Catholic history are a part of the history of America itself. Not even in the more civilized form it has lately taken-as the "anti-Semitism of the liberals," in Peter Viereck's genial phrase-does this intolerance matter any longer. The Catholic community belongs to the definition of the American way, as the churches it has everywhere built are a characteristic feature of the American landscape. So true is this that many of the challenges presently confronting the American Catholic are related to his very belongingness here. The present article undertakes to illustrate this fact.

#### The Sense of the Church

The Catholic community is part of America in a peculiar way. The sociologist now calls it "one of the three American religions." The danger here is a certain "group consciousness" that damages the true sense of the Church.

The development of this group consciousness has its historical explanations. Catholics were once a persecuted minority. Presently they are still a minority; and most of them do not yet realize that today Protestantism and Judaism are likewise each a minority religion, especially in some big cities. The temptation has been to regard the Church as a separate social group, closed upon itself, exclusive, defensive, obliged to be aggressive in defending not only its domestic faith but also its place in society among other social groups. The original temptation to preserve the faith by preserving the immigrant national groups-Irish, German, Italian, Polish—has generally been overcome. But the later form of group consciousness, more specifically religious, still endures. One result of it, for instance, has been the vicious circle of which we have seen so much: Protestant aggression begetting Catholic aggressiveness and vice versa. Another has been the mentality breathtakingly betrayed by a headline in the Catholic press, of which I recently heard: "No Catholies Slain by Oklahoma Storm."

This consciousness of the group is not the true sense of the Church, any more than sociology is theology. In Catholic doctrine the Church is indeed a society, visible here on earth, limited in its membership though open to all, clear in its conditions of membership. But the Church is not what the sociologist means by a social group. The Catholic's consciousness of his spiritual community is theological, formed by the doctrine that the true Church is Catholic and One.

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This doctrine is frequently put another way-that the Catholic Church is the one true Church. Here the overtones are different. The word "one" does not, as it should, stress the unity of the Church; it acquires the sense of "only." Similarly the word "Catholic" does not stress the universality of the Church; it identifies the true Church by name, in contrast to other churches. This therefore is a sort of fighting formula against the notion that one religion is as good as another. The danger is real enough in our context of "the three American religions." But the effort to overcome it may have the unwelcome effect of accentuating the more subtle danger resident in Catholic "group consciousness."

The doctrine of St. Augustine—that the true Church is Catholic and One—is more serenely theological. It imprints a sense of the unity of the Church in faith and life amid all the diversities created by different historical eras and national cultures. It also imprints a sense of the universality of the Church—that Catholicity which spans the earth and all its ages, gathering into itself all races and peoples, and fitting all the fragments of truth, elsewhere found, into the inclusive pattern of its own given unity of truth.

This sense of the Catholic unity of the Church seems to be somewhat missing among American Catholics, perhaps not least because they are American. Often missing too are the gracious qualities that this sense of the Church creates—confidence and

courtesy in confronting those who stand outside this unity, an intellectual charity that matches a charity of the heart and a generosity of spirit that "willingly recognizes great and good realities even if they existed before [the Church] herself and outside of her domain," as Pius XII said. I am inclined to think that the chief spiritual challenge presented to the Catholics in America is to rise to the height of their own vision that the true Church is Catholic and One. To do this they need not cease to be Americans. They need only overcome completely the 19th Century temptation to religious nationalism and the 20th Century temptation to religious groupism.

#### The International Idea

A puzzling phenomenon in America is the hostility of many Catholics, and the indifference of many more, to the idea of an organized international community. More is involved than rational patient criticism of the institutions that presently embody the idea—the UN and its many agencies. Criticism of this kind is altogether proper. The puzzling thing is the opposition to the international idea itself. Even more puzzling is the passion that not seldom seems to animate this opposition. It seems to be supposed that the international idea came from the "liberals," or even from the Communists; that Catholics must therefore combat it as they combat secularist liberalism and atheistic communism.

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This somewhat angry isolationist sentiment is not widespread among Catholics, nor is it by any means confined to Catholics. But where it is localized it is also intense. Its causes are not clear. Among them may be a certain black-and-white mentality, a perfectionism that is unwilling to settle for less than a new Christendom in a reborn Age of Faith. The group mentality may be operating, in a refusal to acknowledge the good of anything that originates outside the group America's new international spirit did not, in fact, rise out of the Catholic community).

In any case, one thing is clear. Internationalism, as an idea, is certainly Catholic. It is the reflection on the secular-political plane of a central article of Catholic belief—the religious doctrine of the supranational spiritual unity of mankind.

#### An Intellectual Task

For some 300 years the intellect of the West has been engaged in a great divorce operation. It has progressively effected the divorce of religion and theology from all the other things that men think aboutmorality, philosophy, politics, economics, science, psychiatry, art, creative imagination, poetry, drama. But the suspicion has lately arisen that it is time to reunite all these kinds of knowledge in some manner of lawful wedlock. The new feeling is that the divorce of religion from the reason of man in its varied activities has injured both parties. Here is a supreme challenge to the Catholic intelligence. Its assertion has been that it can put things together; that it can protect the rightful freedom of every activity of human reason; that it can organize all these free activities, under the primacy of Christian faith, into a harmonious pattern that spells that many-splendored thing—Truth. Can it? That is the question today being put to Catholic scholars.

Today it is no longer the fashion to dismiss the question, "What is truth?" as Pilate dismissed it. Thoughtful men are not even content with the pragmatic answer that once was popular, "Truth is what works," or with the pseudo-philosophic answer that still is popular, "Truth is Science." These half-truths are not good enough now-certainly not for youth, Present-day students are by and large not captive to the prejudices, illusions and half-ideas of an elder generation to which they never belonged. You can hardly say that a "mood of reverence" pervades the university. Youth asks rude questions; such is its right. But it is sincere-especially when it asks the rudest of all questions, "What is truth?" The university gives its students all sorts of "answers" to consider, to accept or reject. But ordinarily the student does not get the opportunity to accept or reject Catholic answers. Catholic doctrine, and the philosophies it has inspired, are still conspicuously absent from the university, even in most of the recently added religion courses. There seems to be a two-way chal-

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lenge here; it is put both to the university and to the Catholic scholar.

Furthermore, in a day when antiintellectualism hangs like a smog over the American scene, the Catholic intelligence has another job. Firm confrontation of error is the traditional Catholic duty. But antiintellectualism is in itself an error. It is altogether alien to the tradition set by St. Augustine's injunction, "Love intelligence greatly." It has been said that love of intelligence still stands too far down the list of American Catholic loves: the list then needs to be revised. The members of the Church have today a sort of smog-control job-the task of helping to clear the atmosphere of its smothering anti-intellectualism.

#### Priests and People

The Catholic faith distinguishes between those who teach and rule in the name of the Church and those within the Church who are taught and ruled. A secular consequence of this distinction has been clericalism and anticlericalism. This damaging tension has been no part of the inheritance of the Church in the United States.

Together the priest and his people have built the parish church and the parochial school—twin monuments to their friendship as well as to their faith. Together the bishop and his people have dotted the land with all the buildings needed for the works of charity and social justice that are their common responsibility. This traditional alliance will

endure, since a growing Catholic population in almost every diocese still makes necessary a big brick and mortar job. Constant demands for money are indeed a strain on the layman, especially since he is not always satisfied with the ways in which the money is spent. And the priest may well fear the spiritual dangers inherent in his preoccupation with financial affairs. But it is not out of such problems that the ancient tension between clergy and laity is bred.

If anticlericalism comes to America it will come in some native form in response to some equally native form of clericalism. There are perhaps two clouds on the horizon. There is the kind of clericalism that would deny to the layman-in fact if not in doctrine-any real responsibilities and consequently any genuine freedom even in the fields in which the layman belongs and has competence; journalism and education would be two examples among others. There is consequently a kind of anticlericalism that results from the layman's feeling that he is "not wanted" except as a compliant instrument of the clerical will. These clouds on the American Catholic horizon are presently no bigger than a man's hand. But they forewarn of a challenge that neither clergy nor laity has yet fully faced: how shall the immense energies resident in the faith of the laity be fully utilized in the work of God's kingdom-which is, importantly, the work of freedom and justice in America and in the world community?

The American Catholic is on good ground when he refuses to make an ideological idol out of separation of Church and State. But when he asserts a moral commitment to the religion clauses of the Constitution as to articles of peace in a pluralist society, he takes the highest ground available.

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# Church, State and Religious Liberty

EVERY historian who has catalogued the historical factors which made for religious liberty and separation of Church and State in America would doubtless agree that these institutions came into being under the pressure of their necessity for the public peace. Four leading factors, contributory to this social necessity, are usually listed.

First, there was the great mass of the unchurched. They were either people cut off from religion by the conditions of frontier life; or people careless of religion in consequence of preoccupation with the material concerns of this world; or people concerned with religion as indispensable to morality and therefore to ordered civil life, but unconcerned with, or even hostile toward, what is called organized religion. The fact may be embarrassing to the high-minded believer, but it is nevertheless true that the development of religious freedom in society bears

A substantial part of an article which appeared in Thought, Graduate School, Fordham University, New York 58, N.Y., Summer, 1954. In its original form the Thought article was given as one of five lectures on the Church and American Civilization commemorating the fifty-year jubilee of the College of New Rochelle.

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a distinct relationship to the growth of unbelief and indifference.

Our historical good fortune lay in the particular kind of unbelief that American society has known. It was not Continental laicism, superficially anticlerical, fundamentally antireligious, militant in its spirit, active in its purpose to destroy what it regarded as hateful. Unbelief in America has been rather easy-going, the product more of a naive materialism than of any conscious conviction. The American unbeliever is usually content to say, "I am not personally a religious man," and let the subject drop there, American unbelief is usually respectful of belief, or at least respectful of the freedom to believe. And this fact has been important in influencing the general climate in which our institutions work.

The second factor was the multiplicity of denominations. This was Protestantism's decisive contribution to the cause of religious freedomdecisive because made at a time when the rapidly proliferating denominations were less disposed than they now are to live together in peace. This fact made it necessary to seek a basis for political unity other than the hitherto prevailing one, agreement in religious faith and ecclesiastical polity. Figgis' famous dictum, "Political liberty is the residuary legatee of ecclesiastical animosities," is a historical half-truth. It is not the whole of the truth even in the matter of religious liberty. But the truth in it cannot be denied. In this sense the Cottons and the Mathers made their contribution to American freedom of religion no less, and perhaps more, than the Williamses and Penns. The sheer fact of dissent and sectarian antagonisms was a particularly important motive of the Federal constitutional arrangements; for at that time four states still retained establishments of various kinds. One recalls John Adams' testy reluctance to hear any argument about disestablishment in Massachusetts.

Thirdly, the economic factor was by no means unimportant. It was present in the somewhat impenetrable thinking of the two Calverts. The merchants of New Jersey, New York, Virginia and the more southern colonies were as emphatically on the side of religious freedom as on the side of commercial profits. Persecution and discrimination were as bad for business affairs as they were for the affairs of the soul.

A fourth factor of lesser importance was the pressure, not indeed very great but real enough, exerted by the widening of religious freedom in England. This growth had been fostered by the same factors that were operating more strongly in America. Anglicanism and Nonconformism were engaged in a struggle whose issue was already becoming clear. It was not to be disestablishment; Burke's prejudice, widely shared, would be too strong to permit that. But it would at least be religious freedom (except for Catholics), conjoined with establishment. In America, where the ground was clear for the creation of a new

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prejudice, the development could go all the way.

#### Demands of Social Necessity

These four factors, taken as a sociological complex, made it sufficiently clear to all reasonable men that under American conditions any other course but freedom of religion and separation of Church and State would have been disruptive, imprudent, impractical, indeed impossible. The demands of social necessity were overwhelming. It remains only to insist that in regarding the religion clauses of the First Amendment as articles of peace and in placing the case for them on the primary grounds of their social necessity, one is not taking low ground. Such a case does not appeal to mean-spirited expediency nor does it imply a reluctant concession to force majeure. In the science of law and the art of jurisprudence the appeal to social peace is an appeal to a high moral value. Behind the will to social peace there stands a divine and Christian imperative. This is the classic and Christian tradition.

Roger Williams himself was a powerful spokesman of it. "Sweet peace" (the phrase he uses in *The Bloudy Tenent*) stands at the center of his doctrine; and he adds in the same context that "if it be possible, it is the express command of God that peace be kept." In a letter of 1671 to John Cotton the younger he recalls with satisfaction that his second great work, *The Bloudy Tenent Still More Bloudy* was re-

ceived in England "with applause and thanks" as "professing that of necessity, yea, of Christian equity, there could be no reconciliation, pacification, or living together but by permitting of dissenting consciences to live amongst them."

There is also, along with others, the strong statement with which he concludes his pamphlet, The Hireling Ministry None of Christ's. As the sum of the matter he proclaims the duty of the civil state in the current conditions of religious division "to proclaim free and impartial liberty to all the people of the three nations to choose and maintain what worship and ministry their souls and consciences are persuaded of: which act, as it will prove an act of mercy and righteousness to the enslaved nations, so it is a binding force to engage the whole and every interest and conscience to preserve the common freedom and peace." This is the way whereby "civil peace and the beauty of civilty and humanity [may] be obtained among the chief opposers and dissenters."

Roger Williams was no partisan of the view that all religions ought to be equally free because, for all anybody knows, they may all be equally true, or false. He reckons with truth and falsity in honest fashion. Yet even in the case of a "false religion (unto which the civil magistrate dare not adjoin)" he recommends as the first duty of the civil magistrate "permission (for approbation he owes not what is evil) and this according to Matthew

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13:30, for public peace and quiet's sake." The reference is the parable of the tares.

#### Pius XII

It is interesting that this same parable is referred to by Pius XII in his discourse to a group of Italian jurists on December 6, 1953. This discourse is the latest affirmation of the primacy of the principle of peace (or "union," which is the Pope's synonymous word) when it comes to dealing with the "difficulties and tendencies" which arise out of mankind's multiple pluralisms and dissensions. The "fundamental theoretical principle," says the Pope (and one should underscore the word, "theoretical"; it is not a question of sheer pragmatism, much less of expediency in the low sense), is this: "within the limits of the possible and the lawful, to promote everything that facilitates union and makes it more effective; to remove everything that disturbs it; to tolerate at times that which it is impossible to correct but which on the other hand must not be permitted to make shipwreck of the community from which a higher good is looked for." This higher good, in the context of the whole discourse, is "the establishment of peace."

From this firm footing of traditional principle the Pope proceeds to reject the view of certain Catholic theorists who in a sort of cutand-thrust manner would wish to "solve" the problem of religious pluralism on the ultimate basis of this doctrinaire argument: Religious

and moral error have no rights and therefore must always be repressed when repression of them is possible. In contradiction of this view the Pope says, after quoting the parable of the tares:

The duty of repressing religious and moral error cannot therefore be an ultimate norm of action. It must be subordinated to higher and more general norms which in some circumstances permit, and even perhaps make it appear the better course of action, that error should not be impeded in order to promote a greater good.

The Pope makes a clear distinction between the abstract order of ethics or theology, where it is a question of qualifying doctrines or practices as true or false, right or wrong, and the concrete order of jurisprudence, where it is a question of using or not using the coercive instrument of law in favor of the true and good, against the false and wrong. In this latter order the highest and most general norm is the public peace, the common good in its various aspects. This is altogether a moral norm.

Roger Williams had many a quarrel with the Roman papacy; in fact, he wanted it abolished utterly. It is therefore piquant in itself, and also a testimony to the strength of the hold that the central Christian tradition had upon him, to read this basic principle of Catholic teaching in the Bloudy Tenent:

It must be remembered that it is one thing to command, to conceal, to approve evil; and another thing to permit une

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and suffer evil with protestation against it or dislike of it, at least without approbation of it. This sufferance or permission of evil is not for its own sake but for the sake of the good, which puts a respect of goodness upon such permission.

The "good" here is the public peace. Williams concludes the passage thus:

And therefore, when it crosseth not an absolute rule to permit and tolerate (as in the case of the permission of the souls and consciences of all men of the world), it will not hinder our being holy as He is holy in all manner of conversation.

In substance Pius XII says the same thing, that it crosseth not an absolute rule to permit within the civil community, as he says, "the free exercise of a belief and of a religious and moral practice which possesses validity" in the eyes of some of its members. In fact, the Pope goes much farther when he flatly states that:

in certain circumstances God does not give men any mandate, does not impose any duty, and does not even communicate the right to impede or to repress what is erroneous and false.

The First Amendment is simply the legal enunciation of this papal statement. It does not say that there is no distinction between true and false religion, good and bad morality. But it does say that in American circumstances the conscience of the community, aware of its moral obligations to the peace of the community, and speaking therefore as the voice of God, does not give gov-

ernment any mandate, does not impose upon it any duty, and does not even communicate to it the right to repress religious opinions or practices, even though they are erroneous and false.

On these grounds it is easy to see why the Catholic conscience has always consented to the religion clauses of the Constitution. They conform to the highest criterion for all legal rulings in this delicate matter. The criterion is moral; therefore the law that meets it is good, because it is for the common good. Therefore the consent given to the law is given on grounds of moral principle. To speak of expediency here is altogether to misunderstand the moral nature of the community and its collective moral obligation toward its own common good. The origins of our fundamental law are in moral principle; the obligations it imposes are moral obligations, binding in conscience. One may not, without moral fault, act against these articles of peace.

#### Distinction of Church and State

If the demands of social necessity account for the emergence in America of religious freedom as a fact, they hardly account for certain peculiarities of the first of our prejudices and for the depth of feeling that it evokes. Another powerful historical force must be considered, namely, the dominant impulse toward self-government, government by the people in the most earnest sense of the word.

Above all else the early Americans

wanted political freedom. And the force of this impulse necessarily acted as a corrosive upon the illegitimate "unions" of Church and State which the post-Reformation era had brought forth. The establishments of the time were, by and large, either theocratic, wherein the State was absorbed in the Church, or Erastian, wherein the Church was absorbed in the State. In both cases the result was some limitation upon freedom, either in the form of civil disabilities imposed in the name of the established religion, or in the form of religious disabilities imposed in the name of the civil law of the covenanted community.

The drive toward popular freedom would with a certain inevitability sweep away such establishments. Men might share the fear of Roger Williams, that the State would corrupt the Church, or the fear of Thomas Jefferson, that the Church would corrupt the State. In either case their thought converged to the one important conclusion: an end had to be put to the current confusions of the religious and political orders; the ancient distinction between Church and State had to be newly reaffirmed in a manner adapted to the American scene. Calvinist theocracy, Anglican Erastianism. Gallican absolutism-all were vitiated by the same taint: they violated in one way or another this traditional distinction.

The dualism of mankind's two hierarchically ordered forms of social life had been Christianity's cardinal contribution to the Western political tradition, as everyone knows who has looked into the monumental work of the two Carlyles, Medieval Political Thought in the West. Perhaps equally with the very idea of law itself it had been the most fecund force for freedom in society. The distinction had always been difficult to maintain in practice, even when it was affirmed in theory. But when it was formally denied the result was an infringement of man's freedom of religious faith or of his freedom as a citizenan infringement of either or both. Hence the generalized American impulse toward freedom inevitably led to a new and specially emphatic affirmation of the traditional distinc-

The distinction lay readily within the reach of the early American lawyers and statesmen; for it was part of the English legal heritage, part of the patrimony of the common law. One can see it appearing, for instance, in Madison's famous Memorial and Remonstrance, where it is interpreted in a manner conformable to the anti-ecclesiasticism which he had in common with Jefferson.

But the interesting figure here is again Roger Williams. Reading him, the Catholic theorist is inclined to agree with those "juditious persons" whose verdict was reluctantly and belatedly recorded by Cotton Mather. They "judged him," said Mather, "to have the root of the matter in him." In the present question the root of the matter is this distinction of the spiritual and temporal orders

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and their respective jurisdictions. One is tempted to think that he got hold of this root at least partly because of his early acquaintance with English law; he was for a time secretary to the great Sir Edward Coke and it is at least not unlikely that he continued his legal interests at Cambridge. In any event, this distinction was a key principle with Williams; he had his own special understanding of it, but at least he understood it.

#### Church, State and Constitution

As has been said Roger Williams was not a Father of the Federal Constitution; he is adduced here only as a witness, in his own way, to the genuine Western tradition of politics. The point is that the distinction of Church and State, one of the central assertions of this tradition, found its way into the Constitution. There it received a special embodiment, adapted to the peculiar genius of American government and to the concrete conditions of American society.

How this happened need not concern us. Certainly it was in part because the artisans of the Constitution had a clear grasp of the distinction between State and society, which had been the historical product of the distinction between Church and State, inasmuch as the latter distinction asserted the existence of a whole wide area of human concerns which were remote from the competence of government.

Calhoun's "force of circumstances"

also had a great deal of influence; here again it was a matter of the Fathers building better than they knew. Their major concern was sharply to circumscribe the powers of government. The area of state—that is, legal—concern was limited to the pursuit of certain enumerated secular purposes (to say that the purposes are secular is not to deny that many of them are also moral; so for instance the establishment of justice and peace, the promotion of the general welfare, etc.).

Thus made autonomous in its own sphere, government was denied all competence in the field of religion. In this field freedom was to be the rule and method; government was powerless to legislate respecting an establishment of religion and likewise powerless to prohibit the free exercise of religion. Its single office was to take the legal or judicial steps necessary on given occasions to make effective the guarantee of freedom.

The concrete applications of this in itself quite simple solution have presented great historical and legal difficulties. This has been inevitable, given the intimacy with which religion is woven into the whole social fabric, and given, too, the evolution of government from John Adams "plain, simple, intelligible thing, quite comprehensible by common sense," to the enormously complicated and sprawling thing which now organizes a great part of our lives, handles almost all education, and much social welfare.

In particular, we have not yet

found an answer to the question whether government can make effective the primary intention of the First Amendment, the guarantee of freedom of religion, simply by attempting to make more and more "impregnable" what is called, in Roger Williams' fateful metaphor, the "wall of separation" between Church and State.

However, what concerns us here is the root of the matter, the fact that the American Constitution embodies in a special way the traditional principle of the distinction between Church and State. For Catholics this fact is of great and providential importance for one major reason: it serves sharply to set off our constitutional system from the system against which the Church waged its long-drawn-out fight in the nineteenth century, namely, Jacobinism, or (in Carlton Hayes's term) sectarian Liberalism, or (in the more definitive term used today) totalitarian democracy.

It is now coming to be recognized that the Church opposed the "separation of Church and State" of the sectarian Liberals because in theory and in fact it did not mean separation at all but perhaps the most drastic unification of Church and State which history had known. The Jacobin "free State" was as regalist as the ancien régime, and even more so. Writing as a historian, de Tocqueville long ago made this plain. And the detailed descriptions which Leo XIII, writing as a theologian and political moralist, gave

of the Church's "enemy" make the fact even more plain. Within this "free State" the so-called "free Church" was subject to a political control more complete than the Tudor or Stuart or Bourbon monarchies dreamed of. The evidence stretches all the way from the Civil Constitution of the Clergy in 1790 to the Law of Separation in 1905.

In the system sponsored by the sectarian Liberals, as has been well said, "The State pretends to ignore the Church; in reality it never took more cognizance of her." In the law of 1905, the climactic development, the Church was arrogantly assigned a juridical statute articulated in forty-four articles, whereby almost every aspect of her organization and action was minutely regulated. Moreover, this was done on principle—the principle of the primacy of the political, the principle of "everything within the State, nothing above the State."

This was the cardinal thesis of sectarian Liberalism, whose full historical development is now being witnessed in the totalitarian "people's democracies" behind the Iron Curtain. As the Syllabus and its explicatory documents-as well as the multitudinous writings of Leo XIIImake entirely clear, it was this thesis of the juridical omnipotence and omnicompetence of the State which was the central object of the Church's condemnation of the Jacobin development. It was because freedom of religion and separation of Church and State were predicated ne

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of ted on this thesis that the Church refused to accept them in thesi, as the phrase has it.

This thesis was utterly rejected by the founders of the American Republic. The rejection was as warranted as it was providential, because this thesis is not only theologically heterdox, as denying the reality of the Church; it is also politically revolutionary, as denying the substance of the liberal tradition. The American thesis is that government is not juridically omnipotent; its powers are limited, and one of the principles of limitation is the distinction between State and Church, in their purposes, methods, and manner of organization. The Jacobin thesis was basically philosophical; it derived from a sectarian concept of the autonomy of reason. It was also theological, as implying a sectarian concept of religion and of the Church. In contrast, the American thesis is simply political; it asserts the theory of a free people under a limited government, a theory that is recognizably part of the Christian political tradition, and altogether defensible in the manner of its realization under American circumstances.

It may indeed be said that the American constitutional system exaggerates the distinction between Church and State by its self-denying ordinances. However, it must also be said that government rarely appears to better advantage than when passing self-denying ordinances. In any event, it is one thing to exaggerate a traditional distinction along

the lines of its inherent tendency; it is quite another thing to abolish the distinction. In the latter case the result is a vicious monistic society; in the former, a faultily dualistic one. The vice in the Jacobin system could only be condemned by the Church, not in any way condoned. The fault in the American system can be recognized as such, without condemnation. There are times and circumstances, Chesterton jocosely said, when it is necessary to exaggerate in order to tell the truth. There are also times and circumstances, one may more seriously say, when some exaggeration of the restrictions placed on government is necessary in order to insure freedom. These circumstances of social necessity were and are present in America.

#### The Church in America

Here then is the second leading reason why the American solution to the problem of religious pluralism commends itself to the Catholic conscience. In the discourse already cited Pius XII states, as the two cardinal purposes of a Concordat, first, "to assure to the Church a stable condition of right and of fact within society," and second, "to guarantee to her a full independence in the fulfillment of her divine mission." It may be maintained that both of these objectives are sufficiently achieved by the religious provisions of the First Amendment.

It is obvious that the Church in America enjoys a stable condition in fact. That her status at law is not less stable ought to be hardly less obvious, if only one has clearly in mind the peculiarity of the American affirmation of the distinction between church and state. This affirmation is made through the imposition of limits on government, which is confined to its own proper ends, those of temporal society. In contrast to the Jacobin system in all its forms, the American Constitution does not presume to define the Church or in any way to supervise her exercise of authority in pursuit of her own distinct ends. The Church is entirely free to define herself and to exercise to the full her spiritual jurisdiction. It is legally recognized that there is an area which lies outside the competence of government. This area coincides with the area of the divine mission of the Church, and within this area the Church is fully independent, immune from interference by political authority.

The juridical result of the American limitation of governmental powers is the guarantee to the Church of a stable condition of freedom as a matter of law and right. It should be added that this guarantee is made not only to the individual Catholic but to the Church as an organized society with its own law and jurisdiction. The reason is that the American state is not erected on the principle of the unity and indivisibility of sovereignty which was the post-Renaissance European development. Nowhere in the American structure is there accumulated the plenitude of legal sovereignty possessed in England by the Queen

in Parliament. In fact, the term "legal sovereignty" makes no sense in America, where sovereignty (if the alien term must be used) is purely political. The United States has a government, or better, a structure of governments operating on different levels. The American state has no sovereignty in the classic Continental sense. Within society, as distinct from the State, there is room for the independent exercise of an authority which is not that of the State. This principle has more than once been affirmed by American courts, most recently by the Supreme Court in the Kedroff case. The validity of this principle strengthens the stability of the Church's condition at law.

Perhaps the root of the matter, as hitherto described, might be seen summed up in an incident of early American and Church history. This is Leo Pfeffer's account of it:

In 1783 the papal nuncio at Paris addressed a note to Benjamin Franklin suggesting that, since it was no longer possible to maintain the previous status whereunder American Catholics were subject to the Vicar Apostolic at London, the Holy See proposed to Congress that a Catholic bishopric be established in one of the American cities. Franklin transmitted the note to the [Continental] Congress, which directed Franklin to notify the nuncio that "the subject of his application to Doctor Franklin being purely spiritual, it is without the jurisdiction and powers of Congress, who have no authority to permit or refuse it, these powers being reserved to the several states individually." (Not many years later the several states would likewise declare themselves to "have no authority to permit or refuse" such a purely spiritual exercise of ecclesiastical jurisdiction.)

The good nuncio must have been mightily surprised on receiving this communication. Not for centuries had the Holy See been free to erect a bishopric and appoint a bishop without the prior consent of government, without prior exercise of the governmental right of presentation, without all the legal formalities with which the so-called Catholic states had fettered the freedom of the Church. In the United States the freedom of the Church was completely unfettered; she could organize herself with the full independence which is her native right. This, it may be confidently said, was a turning point in the long and complicated history of Church-State relations.

#### The American Experience

One final ground for affirming the validity of the religion clauses of the First Amendment as good law must be briefly touched on. Holmes's famous dictum, "The life of the law is not logic but experience," has more truth in it than many other Holmesian dicta. When a law ceases to be supported by a continued experience of its goodness, it becomes a dead letter, an empty legal form. Although pure pragmatism cannot be made the philosophy of law, nonetheless the value of any given law is importantly pragmatic. The First Amendment surely passes this test of good law. In support of it one can adduce an American experience. One might well call it the American experience in the sense that it has been central in American history and also unique in the history of the world.

This experience has three facets, all interrelated. First, America has proved by experience that political unity and stability are possible without uniformity of religious belief and practice, without the necessity of any governmental restrictions on any religion. Before the days of the Federal Republic some men had tried to believe that this could be so; thus, for instance, the politiques in France, in their attack upon the classic Gallican and absolutist thesis, "One law, one faith, one king." But this thesis, and its equivalents, had not been finally disproved. This event was accomplished in the United States; and the refutation has been furnished by a manner of argument which is itself irrefutable —an argument from experience.

For a century and a half the United States has displayed to the world the fact that political unity and stability are not inherently dependent on the common sharing of one religious faith. If therefore such a dependence elsewhere exists, it must be explained not in terms of inherent necessity but in terms of particular circumstances. Such circumstances may exist, for instance, in Spain; and undoubtedly the Spaniard must be allowed to argue from his own experience. But it should be made plain that he is arguing from the experience of his own

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ligious unity.

The second American experience was that stable political unity, which means perduring agreement on the common good of man at the level of performance, is positively strengthened by the exclusion of religious differences from the area of concern allotted to government. In America we have been rescued from the disaster of ideological parties. They are a disaster because, where such parties exist, power becomes a special kind of prize: the struggle for power is a partisan struggle for the means whereby the opposing ideology may be destroyed. It has been remarked that only in a disintegrating society does politics become a controversy over ends; it should be simply a controversy over means to ends already agreed on with sufficient unanimity.

The Latin countries of Europe have displayed this spectacle of ideological politics, a struggle between a host of "isms," all of which pretend to a final view of man and society, with the twin results of governmental paralysis and seemingly irremediable social division. In contrast, the American experience of political unity has been almost Utopian. (Even the Civil War does not refute this view; it was not an ideological conflict but simply, in the more descriptive Southern phrase, a war between the States. a conflict of interests.) To this experience of political unity the First Amendment has made a unique contribution; and in doing so it has qualified as good law.

The third and most striking aspect of the American experience consists in the fact that religion itself, and not least the Catholic Church, has benefited by our free institutions, by the maintenance, even in exaggerated form, of the distinction between Church and State. Within the same span of history the experience of the Church elsewhere, especially in the Latin lands, has been alternatively an experience of privilege or persecution. The reason lay in a particular concept of government. It was alternatively the determination of government to ally itself either with the purposes of the Church or with the purposes of some sect or other (sectarian Liberalism, for instance) which made a similar, however erroneous, claim to possess the full and final truth. The dominant conviction, whose origins are really in pagan antiquity, was that government should represent transcendent truth and by its legal power make this truth prevail. However, in the absence of social agreement as to what the truth really was, the result was to involve the Catholic truth in the vicissitudes of power. It would be difficult to say which experience, privilege or persecution, proved in the end to be the more damaging or gainful to the Church.

In contrast, American government has not undertaken to represent transcendental truth in any of the versions of it current in American society. It does indeed represent the ine

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rican t the commonly shared moral values of the community. It also represents the supreme religious truth expressed in the motto on American coins: "In God we trust"; the motto expresses the two truths without which, as the Letter to the Hebrews says, "nobody reaches God's presence," namely, "to believe that God exists and that he rewards those who try to find him" (Hebrews 11:6).

For the rest, government represents the truth of society as it actually is; and the truth is that American society is religiously pluralist. The truth is lamentable; it is nonetheless true. Many of the beliefs entertained within society ought not to be believed, because they are false; nonetheless men believe them. It is not the function of government to resolve the dispute between conflicting truths, all of which claim the final validity of transcendence. As representative of a pluralist society, wherein religious faith is-as it must be-free, government undertakes to represent the principle of freedom.

#### Pattern in Miniature

In taking this course American government would seem to be on the course set by Pius XII for the religiously pluralist international community, of which America offers, as it were, a pattern in miniature. In the discourse already cited he distinguishes two questions: "The first concerns the objective truth and the obligation of conscience toward that which is objectively true and

good." This question, he goes on, "can hardly be made the object of discussion and ruling among the individual states and their communities, especially in the case of a plurality of religious confessions within the same community."

In other words, government is not a judge of religious truth; parliaments are not to play the theologian. In accord with this principle American government does not presume to discuss, much less rule upon, the objective truth or falsity of the various religious confessions within society. It puts to itself only Pius XII's second question, which concerns "the practical attitude" of government in the face of religious pluralism. It answers this question by asserting that in the given circumstances it has neither the mandate nor the duty nor the right to legislate either in favor of or against any of the religious confessions existent in American society, which in its totality government must represent. It will therefore only represent their freedom, in the face of civil law, to exist, since they do in fact exist. This is precisely the practical attitude which Pius XII recognizes as right, as the proper moral and political course.

In consequence of this American concept of the representative function of government, the experience of the Church in America, like the general American experience itself, has proved to be almost Utopian, when one scans it from the viewpoint of the value upon which the Church sets primary importance,

namely, her freedom in the fulfillment of her spiritual mission to communicate divine truth and grace to the souls of men, and her equally spiritual mission of social justice and peace.

The Church has not enjoyed a privileged status in public life; at the same time she has not had to pay the price of this privilege. A whole book could be written on the price of such legal privilege. Another book could be written on the value of freedom without privilege. In fact, both books have been written, on the metaphorical pages of history. And looking over his own continually unrolling historical man-

clined to conclude that his is a valid book. It does not develop a doctrinaire thesis, but it does prove a point.

uscript the American Catholic is in-

The point is that the goodness of the First Amendment as constitutional law is manifested not only by political but also by religious experience. By and large (for no historical record is without blots) it has been good for religion, for Catholicism, to have had simply the right of freedom. This right is at the same time the highest of privileges, and it too has its price. But the price has not been envy and enmity. the coinage in which the Church paid for privilege. It has only been the price of sacrifice, labor, added responsibilities; and these things are redemptive.

In the final analysis any validation of the First Amendment as good law-no matter by whom undertaken, be he Protestant, Catholic, Jew, or secularist—must make appeal to the three arguments developed above: the demands of social necessity, the rightfulness within our own circumstances of the American manner of asserting the distinction between Church and State, and the lessons of experience. Perhaps the last argument is the most powerful. It is also, I may add, the argument which best harmonizes with the general tone which arguments for our institutions are accustomed to adopt.

In a curiously controlling way this tone was set by the Federalist papers. These essays were not political treatises after the manner of Hobbes and Hegel, Rousseau and Comte, or even John Locke. It has been remarked that in America no treatises of this kind have been produced; and it is probably just as well.

The authors of the Federalist papers were not engaged in broaching a political theory universal in scope and application, a plan for an Ideal Republic of Truth and Virtue. They were arguing for a particular Constitution, a special kind of governmental structure, a limited ensemble of concrete laws, all designed for application within a given society. They were in the tradition of the Revolutionary thinkers who led a colonial rebellion, not in the name of a set of flamboyant abstractions, but in the name of the sober laws of the British Constitution which they felt were being violated in their regard. It has been pointed out that the only real slogan lune

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f the stitug viobeen logan the Revolution produced was: "No taxation without representation." It has not the ring of a trumpet; its sound is more like the dry rustle of a lawyer's sheaf of parchment.

It is in the tone of this tradition of American political writing that one should argue for the First Amendment. The arguments will tend to be convincing in proportion as their key of utterance approaches a dry rustle and not a wild ring. The arguments here presented are surely dry enough. Perhaps they will not satisfy the doctrinaire, the theologizer. But they do, I think, show that the first of our prejudices is "not a prejudice destitute of reason, but involving in it profound and extensive wisdom." This is all that need be shown; it is likewise all that can be shown.

The Catholic Church in America is committed to this prejudice by the totality of her experience in American history. As far as I know, the only ones who doubt the firmness, the depths, the principled nature of this commitment are not Catholics. They speak without knowledge and without authority; and the credence they exact has emotional origins.

If perhaps what troubles them is the fact that the commitment is limited, in the sense that it is not to the truth and sanctity of a dogma but only to the rationality and goodness of a law, they might recall the story of Pompey. After the capture of Jerusalem in 63 B.C. he went to the Temple and forced his way into the Holy of Holies. To his intense astonishment he found it empty. He should not have been astonished; for the emptiness was the symbol of the absence of idolatry. It symbolized the essential truth of Judaism, that One is the Lord. Professor Boorstin, who recounts the tale, adds:

Perhaps the same surprise awaits the student of American culture [or, I add, the American Constitution] if he finally manages to penetrate the arcanum of our belief. And for a similar reason. Far from being disappointed, we should be inspired that in an era of idolatry, when so many nations have filled their sanctuaries with ideological idols, we have had the courage to refuse to do so.

The American Catholic is on good ground when he refuses to make an ideological idol out of religious freedom and separation of Church and State, when he refuses to "believe" in them as articles of faith. He takes the highest ground available in this matter of the relations between religion and government when he asserts that his commitment to the religion clauses of the Constitution is a moral commitment to them as articles of peace in a pluralist society.

The political experiment of modernity has consisted in an effort to install in the world a secular substitute for all that the Christian tradition has meant by the "freedom of the Church." This freedom was Christianity's contribution to freedom in the political sense.

## Church, State and Political Freedom

As THE standpoint for my remarks I shall assume that we now stand at the "end of modern times." The phrase, in one or other variant, has come into common use. Whether "modern times" began with the fall of Constantinople in the fifteenth century, or with the rise of Gnosticism in the second century, is a matter of dispute. But there is some scholarly agreement today that the spiritual era known as "modern" is running to a close.

A new era is beginning. Almost everything about it is unpredictable, save that it will be an era of unprecedented dangers. The danger of violent destruction threatens the physical fabric of civilization. And the spiritual nature of man himself is menaced by more insidious corruptions. I have no wish to be a prophet of *Untergang*; I do not believe that downfall is our inevitable civilization fate. But I do think that confusion is the present civilicivilizational fate. But I do think conference would not have convened.

Is the Problem today rightly identified, in one word, as "free-dom"? The point might be argued.

<sup>\*</sup>Reprinted from Modern Age, Foundation for Foreign Affairs, 64 E. Jackson Blvd., Chicago 4, Ill., Fall, 1957.

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In any case, the Problem is not "freedom" in the sense in which modernity has understood the term. So rapidly have the generations slipped beneath our feet that the prophets of modernity and of its "freedom"-the Miltons and the Mills, the Madisons and the Jeffersons-have already begun to seem slightly neolithic figures to our backward glance. Certain of their insights retain validity. But the adequacy of their systems can no longer be upheld. The broad question has arisen, whether the problem of freedom in the post-modern era can be satisfactorily dealt with in terms of philosophies (and theologies) which bear too heavily the stamp of modernity.

The problem does not center on some minor malfunctions of the mechanisms of freedom. Our "free institutions," in their procedural aspects, are working today as well as they ever have worked or ever will work. Some tinkering with them may be needed. But tinkering is not our full task. It is characteristic of the present moment that all the serious talk is about Basic Issues.

#### The Basic Issues

The initial difficulty is that these Basic Issues are not easily located and defined. Perhaps rather abruptly, I shall venture a twofold formulation.

First, the Basic Issues of our time concern the spiritual substance of a free society, as it has historically derived from the central Christian concept, res sacra homo, "Man is a

sacredness" (only the abstract noun can render the Latin rightly). Second, the Basic Issues concern the fundamental structure of a free society. I do not mean its legal structure, as constitutionally established; few of the real problems today are susceptible of solution, or even of statement, in legal language. I mean rather the ontological structure of society, of which the constitutional order should be only the reflection. This underlying social structure is a matter of theory; that is, it is to be conceived in terms of a theorem with regard to the relation between the sacrednesses inherent in man and the manifold secularities amid which human life is lived.

This twofold formulation is very general. I set it down thus to make clear my conviction that the Basic Issues today can only be conceived in metaphysical and theological terms. They are issues of truth. They concern the nature and structure of reality itself—meaning by reality the order of nature as accessible to human reason, and the economy of salvation as disclosed by the Christian revelation.

But these general formulas may not be useful for purposes of argument. And argument, I take it, is our purpose. Therefore a more pragmatic approach to our problem is indicated. No philosopher today will uphold the crude tenet of an older outworn pragmatism, that whatever works is true. But any philosopher must acknowledge the more subtle truth, that whatever is not true will somehow fail to work. Prof. Hocking

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has stated the case in his book, The Coming World Civilization:

For whatever is real in the universe is no idle object of speculation; it is a working factor in experience or it is nothing. Consciously or subconsciously we are always dealing with it; to entertain false notions about it, or simply to neglect it, will bring about maladjustments which thrust this neglect forward into consciousness. A false metaphysic, engendering empirical malaise, calls for a new work of thought, begetting an altered premise.

The statement suggests a method of inquiry. What are our malaises today? That is, what are the discomforts and uneasinesses that trouble, not the surface of mind and soul, but their very depths? Are these distresses somehow traceable to falsities in the philosophy that has inspired the political experiment of modernity? If so, what new work of thought is needed? And what alterations in the premises of the modern experiment are called for?

A process of questioning, more or less inspired by this method, has been going on of late; and in the course of it many ideas dear to a later modernity have found their way into Trotsky's famous "dustbin of history."

For instance, we no longer cherish the bright and brittle eighteenthcentury concept of "reason"; we do not believe in the principle of automatic harmony nor in the inevitability of progress. We have rejected that principle of modernity which asserted that government is the only enemy of freedom. We see that the modern concept of freedom itself was dangerously inadequate because it neglected the corporate dimension of freedom. We see too that modernity was wrong in isolating the problem of freedom from its polar terms-responsibility, justice, order. law. We have realized that the modern experiment, originally conceived only as an experiment in Freedom, had to become also an experiment in Justice. We know that the myopic individualism of modernity led it into other errors, even into a false conception of the problem of the state in terms of the unreal dichotomy. individualism vs. collectivism. We have come to disbelieve the cardinal tenet of modernity which regarded every advance in man's domination over nature-that is, every new accumulation of power-as necessarily liberating. We have begun to understand the polyvalence of power. In fact, we know that we are postmodern men, living in a new age, chiefly because we have begun to see what modernity never saw-that the central problem is not the realization of the Cartesian dream. This dream today is largely reality; man is the master of nature. Our problem now is the dissolution of a nightmare that never visited Descartesthe horrid vision of man, master of nature, but not master of himself.

It may be useful here to carry this process of questioning farther, and to an altogether basic level. This can best be done, I think, by viewing the modern political experiment in its continuity with the longer liberal tradition of the West.

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My generalization will be that the political experiment of modernity has essentially consisted in an effort to find and install in the world a secular substitute for all that the Christian tradition has meant by the pregnant phrase, the "freedom of the Church." This freedom, though not a freedom of the political order, was Christianity's basic contribution to freedom in the political order. Some brief articulation of the concept will initially be necessary.

Modernity dropped the phrase out of its political vocabulary, and eliminated the thing from its political edifice, and installed in its place a secular surrogate—this will be my second assertion.

Thirdly, I shall attempt to identify some of the more acute stresses and distresses currently being experienced at our present stage in the modern experiment.

Finally, I shall attempt to state some of the spiritual issues which lie, I think, at the origin of our empirical malaises. It will be sufficient for my purpose simply to present these issues for argument.

#### Freedom of the Church

In his book, Libertas: Kirche and Weltordnung Zeitalter des Investiturstreites (a broad study of the basic issues involved in that great medieval struggle between opposed conceptions of the nature and order of Christian society which centered around Gregory VII), Gerd Tellenbach writes: "In moments of con-

sidered solemnity, when their tone was passionate and their religious feeling at its deepest, Gregory VII and his contemporaries called the object towards which they were striving the 'freedom' of the Church." More than six centuries earlier the same idea had inspired Ambrose in his conflicts with Gratian and Theodosius. And eight centuries later, Leo XIII used the same phrase to define the goal of his striving in a more radical conflict between the Church and modernity, now fully developed not only as a spirit but also as a polity. In more than sixty Leonine documents the phrase, the "freedom of the Church," appears some eighty-one times.

On any showing, even merely historical, we are here in the presence of a Great Idea, whose entrance into history marked the beginning of a new civilizational era.

It is an historical commonplace to say that the essential political effect of Christianity was to destroy the classical view of society as a single homogeneous structure, within which the political power stood forth as the representative of society both in its religious and in its political aspects. Augustus was both Summus Imperator and Pontifex Maximus; the ius divinum was simply part of the ius civile; and outside the empire there was no other society, but only barbarism.

The new Christian view was based on a radical distinction between the order of the sacred and the order of the secular: "Two there are, august Emperor, by which this world is ruled on title of original and sovereign right—the consecrated authority of the priesthood and the royal power." In this celebrated sentence of Gelasius I, written to the Byzantine Emperor Anastasius I in 494 A.D., the emphasis laid on the word "two" bespoke the revolutionary character of the Christian dispensation.

In his book, Sacrum Imperium, Alois Dempf called this Gelasian text the "Magna Charta of the whole 'freedom of the Church' in medieval times." It was the charter of a new freedom, such as the world had never known. Moreover, it was a freedom with which man could not enfranchise himself, since it was the effect of God's own "magnificent dispensation," in Gelasius' phrase. The whole patristic and medieval tradition, which Leo XIII reiterated to the modern world, asserts the freedom of the Church to be a participation in the freedom of the Incarnate Son of God, the God-Man, Christ Jesus.

For our purposes here we can consider this new freedom to be twofold. First, there is the freedom of the Church as a spiritual authority. To the Church is entrusted the cura animarum; and this divine commission endows her with the freedom to teach, to rule, and to sanctify, with all that these empowerments imply as necessary for their free exercise. This positive freedom has a negative aspect—the immunity of the Church, as the suprapolitical sacredness (res sacra), from all manner of politicization, through subor-

dination to the state, or enclosure within the state as instrumentum regni.

Second, there is the freedom of the Church as the Christian people their freedom to have access to the teaching of the Church, to obey her laws, to receive at her hands the sacramental ministry of grace, and to live within her fold an integral supernatural life. In turn, the inherent suprapolitical dignity of this life itself claims "for the faithful the enjoyment of the right to live in civil society according to the precepts of reason and conscience" (Pius XI). And this comprehensive right, asserted within the political community, requires as its complement that all the intrapolitical sacredness (res sacra in temporalibus) be assured of their proper immunity from politicization.

This concept, the res sacra in temporalibus, had all the newness of Christianity itself. It embraces all those things which are part of the temporal life of man, at the same time that, by reason of their Christian mode of existence, or by reason of their finality, they transcend the limited purposes of the political order and are thus invested with a certain sacredness. The chief example is the institution of the family—the marriage contract itself, and the relationships of husband and wife, parent and child.

Included also are other human relationships in so far as they involve a moral element and require regulation in the interests of the personal dignity of man. Such, for instance, une

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are the employer-employe relationship and the reciprocal relations established by the political obligation. Sacred too is the intellectual patrimony of the human race, the heritage of basic truths about the nature of man, amassed by secular experience and reflection, that form the essential content of the social consensus and furnish the basic guarantee that within society conditions of freedom and justice, prosperity and order will prevail, at least to some essential human degree.

Instinctively and by natural inclination the common man knows that he cannot be free if his basic human things are not sacredly immune from profanation by the power of the state and by other secular powers. The question has always been that of identifying the limiting norm that will check the encroachments of secular power and preserve these sacred immunities. Western civilization first found this norm in the pregnant principle, the freedom of the Church.

I should perhaps emphasize that the phrase must be given its full meaning. As a matter of history, the liberal tradition of Western politics did not begin its lengthy, slow, and halting evolution because something like Harnack's wraith-like Wesen des Christentums began to pervade the dominions of imperial Rome. This pale phantom would have been altogether unequal to the task of inaugurating a new political history. What appeared within history was not an "idea" or an "essence" but an existence, a Thing, a visible in-

stitution that occupied ground in this world at the same time that it asserted an astounding new freedom on a title not of this world.

In regard of the temporal order and its powers and processes this complex Existent Thing, the "freedom of the Church," performed a twofold function.

First, the freedom of the Church as the spiritual authority served as the limiting principle of the power of government. It furnished, as it were, a corporate or social armature to the sacred order, within which res sacra homo would be secure in all the freedoms that his sacredness demands. Men found their freedom where they found their faith-within the Church. As it was her corporate faith that they professed, so it was her corporate freedom that they claimed, in the face of the public power and of all private powers. Within the armature of her immunities they and their human things were immune from profanation.

Second, the freedom of the Church as the "people of God" furnished the ultimate directive principle of government. To put it briefly, the Church stood, as it were, between the body politic and the public power, not only limiting the reach of the power over the people, but also mobilizing the moral consensus of the people and bringing it to bear upon the power, thus to insure that the king, in the fine phrase of John of Salisbury, would "fight for justice and for the freedom of the people."

This was the new Christian theorem. I leave aside the historical

question, whether and to what extent the theorem was successfully institutionalized. What matters is the theorem itself: the freedom of the Church, in its pregnant meaning, was conceived to be the key to the Christian order of society. What further matters is the historical fact that the whole equilibrium of social forces which under the guidance of this theory made (however imperfectly) for freedom and justice within society was destroyed by the rise of the national monarchies and by the course of their political evolution in the era of royal absolutism.

#### The Secular Substitute

The basic effort of modern politics, as I have suggested, looked to a re-establishment of the equilibrium. In a much too rapid description of it, the process was simple. The early Christian dualism of Church and State (or better, the dyarchy of Gelasius' "Two there are") was in a sense retained-that is, it endured in a secular political form, namely, in the distinction between State and society which had been the secular political outgrowth of the Christian distinction between Church and State. However, the freedom of the Church, again in its pregnant sense, was discarded as the mediating principle between society and State, between the people and the public power. Instead, a secular substitute was adopted in the form of free political institutions. Through these secular institutions the people would limit the power of government; they would also direct the power of government to its proper ends, which are perennially those of John of Salisbury—the fight for justice and for the freedom of the people.

The key to the whole new political edifice was the freedom of the individual conscience. Here precisely lies the newness of the modern experiment. A great act of trust was made. The trust was that the free individual conscience would effectively mediate the moral imperatives of the transcendental order of justice (whose existence was not doubted in the earlier phases of the modern experiment). Then, through the workings of free political institutions these imperatives would be transmitted to the public power as binding norms upon its action. The only sovereign spiritual authority would be the conscience of the free man. The freedom of the individual conscience, constitutionally guaranteed, would supply the armature of immunity to the sacred order, which now became, by modern definition. precisely the order of the private conscience. And through free political institutions, again constitutionally guaranteed, the moral consensus of the community would be mobilized in favor of justice and freedom in the secular order.

This, I take it, has been in essence the political experiment of modernity. It has been an attempt to carry on the liberal tradition of Western politics, whose roots were in the Christian revolution, but now on a new revolutionary basis—a rejection of the Gelasian thesis, "Two

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there are," which had been the dynamic of the Christian revolution.

I take it, without fear of contradiction, that the rejection of the Gelasian thesis has been common to all the prophets of modernity, from Marsilius of Padua onwards. All of them have been united in viewing the freedom of the Church, in the sense explained, as a trespass upon, and a danger to, their one supreme value—the "integrity of the political order," as the phrase goes.

In this indictment of Christianity, one hears the voice of the secular power as modern history has known

it.

It would not be difficult to demonstrate that this monistic tendency is somehow inherent in the State, in two of its aspects—both as an expression of reason and also as a vehicle of power. Nor would it be difficult to show how this monistic tendency has been visible in practically all the states that have paraded across the stage of history, even in states that bore the name of Christian.

In any case, the tendency has achieved its most striking success in the modern era. It is the most salient aspect of political modernity. Over the whole of modern politics there has hung the monist concept of the indivisibility of sovereignty: "One there is." This has been true even in those states in which the sovereignty, remaining indivisible, has been institutionalized according to the principle of the separation of powers.

The dynamism behind the assertion, "One there is," has, of course,

varied. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it was royal absolutism, whose theorists-Widdrington, Barclay, James I-proclaimed a social and juridical monism in the name of the divine right of kings. In the nineteenth century the dynamism was the Revolution, that whole complex of forces which created Jacobin democracy proclaimed the république indivisible in the name of the sovereignty of the people understood as the social projection of the absolutely autonomous sovereignty of individual reason. In the twentieth century the most successful dynamism has been Soviet communism, which makes the assertion, "One there is," in the name of the unitary class which is destined for world sovereignty, and in the name of its organ, the party, whose function is to be the servant and ally of the materialist forces of history.

In the twentieth century too, as the modern era runs out, the ancient monistic drive to a oneness of society, law, and authority has also appeared in the totalitarianizing tendency inherent in the contemporary idolatry of the democratic process. This democratic monism is urged in the name of something less clear than the république indivisible. What is urged is a monism, not so much of the political order itself, as of a political technique. The proposition is that all the issues of human life-intellectual, religious, and moral issues as well as formally political issues-are to be regarded as, or resolved into, political issues and are to be settled by the single omnicompetent political technique of majority vote. On the surface the monism is one of process; Madison's "republican principle" affords the Final Grounds for the Last Say on All Human Questions. But the underlying idea is a monism of power: "One there is whereby this world is ruled—the power in the people, expressing itself in the preference of a majority; and beyond or beside or above this power there is no other."

Christianity has always regarded the State as a limited order of action for limited purposes, to be chosen and pursued under the direction and correction of the organized moral conscience of society, whose judgments are formed and mobilized by the Church, an independent and autonomous community, qualified to be the interpreter of man's nature and destiny. It has been specific of modernity to regard the State as a moral end in itself, a self-justifying entity with its own self-determined spiritual substance. It is within the secular State, and by appeal to secular sources, that man is to find the interpretation of his own nature and the means to his own destiny. The State itself creates the ethos of society, embodies it, imparts it to its citizens, and sanctions its observance with rewards and punishments.

Outside the tradition of Jacobin or Communist dogmatism, the modern democratic secular State does not indeed pretend to be the Universe or to speak infallibly. But it does assert itself to be the embodiment of whatever fallible human

wisdom may be available to man, because it is the highest school of human experience, beyond which man can find no other School and no other Teacher.

Professor Hocking has put the matter thus:

Outside the Marxist orbit the prevalent disposition of the secular State in recent years has been less to combat the Church than to carry on a slow empirical demonstration of the State's full equivalence in picturing the attainable good life, and its superior pertinence to actual issues. As this demonstration gains force the expectation grows that it will be the Church, not the State, that will wither away. Where the fields of Church and State impinge on each other, as in education and correction, the Church will in time appear superfluous. Where they are different, the Church will be quietly ignored and dropped as irrelevant.

This, says Hocking, is the "secular hypothesis." It is, he adds, the premise of the "experiment we call 'modernity.'" In the language I have been using, the hypothesis asserts: "One there is by which the world is ruled."

The "one" here (sc., outside the Marxist orbit) is the self-conscious free individual, armed with his subjective rights, whose ultimate origins he may have forgotten but whose status as legal certitudes he cherishes. This individual, the product of modernity, has been taught by modernity to stand against any external and corporate authority, except it be mediated to him by democratic processes; to stand against any law in whose making he had no

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voice; to stand finally against any society which asserts itself to be an independent community of thought, superior to the consensus created by the common mind of secular democratic society, and empowered to pass judgment, in the name of higher criteria, on this common mind and on the consensus it assembles.

Outside the Jacobin and Communist traditions this "one ruler," the modern man, does not object to religion, provided that religion be regarded as a private matter which concerns only the conscience and feelings of the individual. In his more expansive moments he will not object even to organized religion-the "churches"-provided they accept the status of voluntary associations for limited purposes which do not impinge upon the public order. But he will not tolerate any marring of his image of the world as modernity conceives it—the image of democratic society as the universal community whose ends are coextensive with the ends of man himself. It is the One Society, with One Law, and with One Sovereign, the politically equal people. Modernity has declared the Gelasian doctrine to be heretical and has outlawed it, in the name of modern orthodoxy, which is a naturalist rationalism.

This dominant image of democratic society as ultimately monist in its structure (whatever may be its constituent and subordinate pluralisms), and as ultimately secular in its substance (whatever historical tribute it may have levied on relig-

ious spiritualities), represents the refined essence of political modernity. Its significance lies in the fact that it confronts us with an experiment in human freedom which has consciously or unconsciously been based on a denial or a disregard of the essential Christian contribution to human freedom, which is the theorem of the freedom of the Church.

#### Man's Uneasiness

We come now to the uneasinesses stirring in the world of post-modern man, and in his soul too. The first may be quickly run over, although it is most profoundly serious. I mean all the uneasiness aroused by our confrontation with international communism.

Communism is, of course, political modernity carried to its logical conclusion. All that is implicit and unintentional in modernity as a phenomenon in what is called the West has become explicit and deliberate in the Communist system. The "secular hypothesis," in Hocking's phrase, has been lifted to the status of a dogma. And Hobbes' prohibition has seen most vicious enforcement; man is not allowed to "see double and mistake his lawful sovereign." The operations of the Communist system would seem to offer an empirical demonstration of the fact that there can be no freedom or justice where God is denied and where everything meant by the freedom of the Church is deliberately excised from the theorem on which the life of the community is based.

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Communism in theory and in practice has reversed the revolution which Christianity initiated by the Gelasian doctrine: "Two there are by which this world is ruled." This new system has proposed with all logic an alternative to the basic structure of society, and a surrogate of society's spiritual substance, as these are defined in the Christian theorem. And the question is, whether there are in the spirit of modernity as such the resources whereby the Christian revolution. with all its hopes of freedom and justice, can be reinstated in its course, and the reactionary counterrevolution halted. The issue is clear enough; two contrary views of the structure of reality are in conflict. And the issue is certainly basic-too basic to be solved either by military measures or by political techniques.

The second post-modern uneasiness derives from the current experience of the "impotence of the State." Here I adopt Hocking's phrase and the thesis it states, as developed in the first part of his book, already cited. (With certain of his subsequent analyses and theses, and with their Gnostic overtones, I have serious difficulties.)

The net of it is that the modern State has, as a matter of empirical fact, proved impotent to do all the things it has undertaken to do. Crime and civic virtue, education, the stimulus and control of economic processes, public morality, justice in the order and processes of law—over all these things the modern State assumed an unshared compe-

tence. But it has proved itself incompetent in a fundamental sense. The reason is that "the State depends for its vitality upon a motivation which it cannot by itself command." As long as this motivation can be assumed to be existent in the body politic, the order of politics (in the broadest sense) moves with some security to its proper ends. But if the motivation fails, there is no power in the state itself to evoke it.

We confront again the dilemma which modernity resolved in its own sense. Is the life of man to be organized in one society, or in two? Modernity chose the unitary hypothesis, that the State itself is the highest form of human association, self-ruled, and self-contained, and self-motivating. But the unitary hypothesis has not been able to sustain itself under the test of experience. Post-modern man has become most uneasily aware of the limitations of the State even in the discharge of its own functions.

The challenge here is to the validity of the suprapolitical tenet upon which modernity staked the whole success of its political experiment. This tenet, I said, was that the individual conscience is the sole ultimate interpreter of the moral order (and of the religious order too), and therefore the sole authentic mediator of moral imperatives to the political order. But the truth of this tenet, confidently assumed by modernity, is now under challenge from a battery of questions.

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the State somehow due to the falsity of this tenet? Is the pragmatic law in operation—that whatever is not true will somewhere fail to work? Or again, is the individual conscience, in modernity's conception of it, equal to the burden that has been thrust upon it—the burden of being the keystone of the modern experiment in freedom? Is it disintegrating under the burden?

If so, what of the free society which it undertook to sustain? Will it perhaps disintegrate in one or other of the two ways in which a political structure can disintegrate—into a formless chaos or into a false order? Will the modern experiment then prove to be simply an interlude between despotisms—between the known and limited despotisms of the past, and the unknown despotisms of the future, which may well be illimitable?

In a word, in consequence of having been enthroned as the One Ruler of this world, has the conscientia exlex of modernity succumbed to hubris, and is it therefore headed for downfall—its own downfall, the downfall of the concept of the moral order amid the bits and pieces of a purely "situational" ethics, and the downfall of the political order projected by the spirit of modernity?

From another point of view the same questions return. It was an essential part of modernity's hope that the moral consensus upon which every society depends for its stability and progress could be sustained and mobilized simply in terms of a fortunate coincidence of individual

private judgments, apart from all reference to a visibly constituted spiritual and moral authority. Has this hope proved valid? Is it perhaps possible that the profound intellectual confusions in the mind of post-modern man, which make necessary today a conference on the essentials of freedom, are somehow witness to the fact that modernity's hope has proved to be hollow? If there be no consensus with regard to what freedom is, and whence it comes, and what it means within the very soul of man, how shall freedom hope to live within society and in its institutions?

There is a final malaise upon which I should touch. It is, I think, related to the fundamental am-

biguity of modern times.

Modernity has maintained that the Christian values are now known to be simply immanent in man; that man has become conscious of them in the course of their emergence in historical experience; and that, whatever may have been the influence of the Christian revelation on the earlier phases of this experience, these values are now simply a human possession, a conquest and an achievement of humanity by man himself. Now that I have arrived, said modernity, Christianity may disappear. Whatever aesthetic appeal it may still retain as a myth, it is not needed as a dynamic of freedom and justice in this world. Res sacra homo is now under a new patronage-singly his own.

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has expressively called the "interior disloyalty of modern times." He means, I think, that there has occurred not only a falsification of history but a basic betrayal of the existential structure of reality itself. If this be true, we are confronted by the gravest issue presented by the whole experiment of modernity.

It will perhaps be sufficient if I simply present the issue as I see it, without undertaking to argue it. Here are its terms. On the one hand, modernity has denied (or ignored, or forgotten, or neglected) the Christian revelation that man is a sacredness, and that his primatial res sacra, his freedom, is sought and found ultimately within the freedom of the Church. On the other hand, modernity has pretended to lay claim to the effects of this doctrine on the order of human culture-the essential effect, for our purposes here, being the imperative laid on John of Salisbury's "king" (say, if you will, the State in all its range of action) to fight for justice and for the freedom of the people. In terms of this denial (or ignorance) and of this pretension (or hypothesis) modernity has conceived its image of political man. Justice is his due, and his function too; but not on the title of his sacredness as revealed by Christ. Freedom is his endowment, and likewise his duty; but not on the title of the freedom of the Church. A fully human life is his destiny; but its fulfillment lies within the horizons of time and space.

The question is, whether this mod-

ern image of political man be a reflection of reality (historical, philosophical, theological), or a mirage projected by prideful human reason into the terra aliena of a greatly ignorant illusion. Undoubtedly, this question will be answered by history, in which the pragmatic law operates. But it would be well, if possible, to anticipate the operation of this law by embarking upon a "new work of thought, begetting an altered premise."

#### The Alternatives

In any case, the sheerly historical alternatives are clear enough. I shall state them in their extremity, using the method of assertion, not of interrogation.

On the one hand, post-modern man can continue to pursue the mirage which bemused modern man. As he does so, a spiritual vacuum will increasingly be created at the heart of human existence. But this vacuity cannot remain uninhabited. It will be like the house in the Gospel, swept and garnished, its vacancy an invitation to what the Gospel expressively calls the "worthless spirit" (spiritus nequam). He then will enter in with seven spirits more worthless than himself, and there set about his work of turning vacuity into chaos.

Less figuratively, if post-modern man, like modern man, rejects the Christian mode of existence, the result will be that an explicitly non-Christian mode of existence will progressively come into being at the heart of human life. It will have its n

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own structure and its own substance. And since it exists, it must manifest its existence and its dynamism. And it will do so—in chaotic violence.

Violence is the mark of the Architect of Chaos, the Evil One, whose presence in the world is part of the structure of the world. It is not by chance that the mark of violence should have been impressed so deeply on these closing decades of the modern era and that the threat of violence should hang so heavily over post-modern man as he takes his first uncertain steps into the new era. It was Nietzsche, I think, who said that the non-Christian man of modern times had not yet fully realized what it means to be non-Christian. But in these last decades the realization has been dawning, as we have watched the frightening emergence and multiplication of that "senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless" man whom Paul met on the streets of non-Christian Corinth and described in his Letter to the Romans.

This development, into a dreadful chaos of violence in which justice and freedom alike would vanish, is not inevitable. An alternative is possible. The way to it lies through a renunciation by post-modern man of the "interior disloyalty of modern times." Thus the new era would have

a new premise on which to pursue the experiment in freedom and justice which political society perennially is. However, I must quickly add that this renunciation is not a political act. If one accepts the doctrine of the Second Council of Orange (A.D. 529) it is the work of the Holy Spirit, who "corrects the will of man from the infidelity unto faith."

Nevertheless, the "new work of thought" to which post-modern man is impelled as he reflects on the increasing fragility of the "secular hypothesis" will not be irrelevant to the fortunes of the future. If only we do not deny our malaises or seek to drown them, the experience of them can be turned to rational account. It is, after all, not beyond the power of reason to recognize illusion when the results of illusion are encountered in experience. Hence reason itself, and its high exercise in argument, could lead us to the recognition of a law, even more basic than the pragmatic law, which our forebears of the modern era most seriously failed to reckon with. It is the law of reality itself: "Only that ought not to be which cannot be." This perhaps would be the altered premise-a rational premise-that a new work of thought might beget.

We cannot hope to make American society the perfect conspiracy based on a unanimous consensus. But we can at least do two things. We can limit the warfare and enlarge the dialog. We can lay down our arms (at least the more barbarous kind!) and we can take up argument.

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## America's Four Conspiracies

THE "free society" seems to be a phrase of American coinage. At least it has no comparable currency in any other language, ancient or modern. The same is true of the phrase "free government." This fact of itself suggests the assumption that American society and its form of government are a unique historical realization. The assumption is generally regarded among us as unquestionable.

However, we have tended of late to pronounce the phrase, "the free society," with a rising interrogatory inflection. The phrase itself, it seems, now formulates a problem. This is an interesting new development. It was once assumed that the American proposition, both social and political, was self-evident; that it authenticated itself on simple inspection; that it was, in consequence, intuitively grasped and generally understood by the American people. This assumption now stands under severe question.

What is the free society, in its "idea"? The very fact that this question is being asked makes it sharply urgent that it be answered. What is at stake is America's understanding of itself. Self-understanding is the necessary condition of a sense

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12 St., of self-identity and self-confidence, whether in the case of an individual or in the case of a people. If the American people can no longer base this sense on naive assumptions of self-evidence, it is imperative that they find other more reasoned grounds for their essential affirmation that they are uniquely a people, uniquely a free society.

Otherwise the peril is great. The complete loss of one's identity is, with all propriety of theological definition, hell. In diminished forms it is insanity. And it would not be well for the American giant to go lumbering about the world today, lost and mad.

#### The Immediate Question

At this juncture I suggest that the immediate question is not whether the free society is really free. This question may be unanswerable; it may even be meaningless as a question, if only for the reason that the norms of freedom seem to have got lost in a welter of confused controversy. Therefore I suggest that the immediate question is whether American society is properly civil. This question is intelligible and answerable, because the basic standard of civility-or civic unity-is not in doubt: "Civilization is formed by men locked together in argument. From this dialog the community becomes a political community."1

The specifying note of political

association is its rational deliberative quality, its dependence for its permanent cohesiveness on argument among men. In this it differs from all other forms of association found on earth.

I am not, of course, maintaining that civil society is a purely rational form of association. Civil society is a need of human nature before it becomes the object of human choice. Moreover, every particular society is a creature of the soil; it springs from the physical soil of earth and from the more formative soil of history. Its existence is sustained by loyalties that are not logical; its ideals are expressed in legends that go beyond the facts and are for that reason vehicles of truth; its cohesiveness depends in no small part on the materialisms of property and interest. Though all this is true, nevertheless the distinctive bond of the civil multitude is reason, or more exactly, that exercise of reason which is argument.

Hence the climate of the City is distinctive. Civic amity gives to it its vital quality. This form of friendship is a special kind of moral virtue, a thing of reason and intelligence, laboriously cultivated by the discipline of passion, prejudice, and narrow self-interest. It is the sentiment proper to the City.

Ideally, I suppose, there should be only one passion in the City—the passion for justice. But the will to justice, though it engages the heart, finds its measure as it finds its origin

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Thomas Gilby, O.P., Between Community and Society, London, Longmans Green, 1953, p. 93.

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in intelligence, in a clear understanding of what is due to the equal citizen from the City and to the City from the citizenry according to the mode of their equality. This commonly shared will to justice is the ground of civic amity as it is also the ground of that unity which is called peace. This unity, qualified by amity, is the highest good of the civil multitude and the perfection of its civility.

If then society is civil when it is formed by men locked together in argument, the question rises: What is the argument about? There are three major themes.

#### The Argument

First, the argument is about public affairs, the res publica, those matters which are for the advantage of the public (in the phrase as old as Plato) and which call for public decision and action by government.

Second, the public argument concerns the affairs of the commonwealth. This is a wider concept. It denotes the affairs that fall, at least in decisive part, beyond the limited scope of government.

The great "affair" of the commonwealth is, of course, education. It includes three general areas of common interest: the school system, its mode of organization, its curricular content, and the level of learning among its teachers; the later education of the citizen in the liberal art of citizenship; and the more general enterprise of the advancement of knowledge by research.

The third theme of public argu-

ment is the most important and the most difficult. It concerns the constitutional consensus whereby the people acquires its identity as a people and the society is endowed with its vital form, its entelechy, its sense of purpose as a collectivity organized for action in history.

The state of civility supposes a consensus that is constitutional, sc., its focus is the idea of law, as surrounded by the whole constellation of ideas that are related to the ratio iuris as its premises, its constituent elements, and its consequences. This consensus is come to by the people; they become a people by coming to it. They do not come to it accidentally, without quite knowing how, but deliberatively, by the methods of reason reflecting on experience. The consensus is an ensemble of substantive truths, a structure of basic knowledge, an order of elementary affirmations that reflect realities inherent in the order of existence. It occupies an established position in society and excludes opinions alien or contrary to itself. This consensus is the intuitional a priori of all the rationalities and technicalities of constitutional and statutory law. It furnishes the premises of the people's action in history and defines the larger aims which that action seeks in internal affairs and in external relations.

It is to this idea of consensus, I take it, that the Declaration of Independence adverts: "We hold these truths to be self-evident . . ." The original American affirmation was simply this: "There are truths, and

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we hold them as the foundations of our political existence as a constitutional commonwealth."

This consensus is the ultimate theme of the public argument whereby American society hopes to achieve and maintain the mark of civility. The whole premise of the argument, if it is to be civilized and civilizing, is that the consensus is real, that among the people everything is not in doubt, but that there is a core of agreement, accord, concurrence, acquiescence. We hold certain truths; therefore we can argue about them.

It seems to have been one of the corruptions of intelligence by positivism to assume that argument ends when agreement is reached. In a basic sense the reverse is true. There can be no argument except on the premise, and within a context, of agreement. Mutatis mutandis, this is true of scientific, philosophical, and theological argument. It is no less true of political argument.

#### The Truths We Hold

The truths we hold were well enough stated. Three are immediate: the limitation of government by law—by a higher law not of government's making, whereby an order of inviolable rights is constituted; the principle of consent; and the right of resistance to unjust rule. These are the heritage of classical and medieval constitutionalism; they center on the idea of law. One truth is remote and metapolitical—that man is not the creature of the City but of God; that the dignity of

man is equal in all men; that there are human purposes which transcend the order of politics; that the ultimate function of the political order is to support man in the pursuit of these purposes; that it is within the power of man to alter his own history in pursuit of his own good. You will not find this pregnant truth elsewhere than in the Western and Christian heritage.

Initially, we hold these truths because they are a patrimony. The consensus is an intellectual heritage; it may be lost to mind or deformed in mind. Its final depository is the public mind. This is indeed a perilous place to deposit what ought to be kept safe; for the public mind is exposed to the corrosive rust of skepticism, to the predatory moths of deceitful doxai (in Plato's sense), and to the incessant thieveries of forgetfulness. Therefore the consensus can only be preserved in the public mind by argument. High argument alone will keep it alive in the vital state of being "held."

Second, we hold these truths because they are true. They have been found in the structure of reality by that dialectic of observation and reflection which is called philosophy. But, as the achievement of reason and experience, the consensus again presents itself for argument. Its vitality depends on a constant scrutiny of political experience, as this experience widens with the developing—or possibly the decaying—life of man in society. Only at the price of this continued contact with experience will a constitutional tradition

continue to be "held," as real knowledge and not simply as a structure

of prejudice.

On both of these titles, as a heritage and as a public philosophy, the American consensus needs to be constantly argued. If the public argument dies from disinterest, or subsides into the angry mutterings of polemic, or rises to the shrillness of hysteria, or trails off into positivistic triviality, or gets lost in a morass of semantics, you may be sure that the barbarian is at the gates of the City.

#### When Barbarism Threatens

Today the barbarian is the man who makes open and explicit the rejection of the traditional role of reason and logic in human affairs. He is the man who reduces all spiritual and moral questions to the test of practical results or to an analysis of language or to decision in terms of individual subjective feeling.

Barbarism threatens when men cease to live together according to reason, embodied in law and custom, and incorporated in a web of institutions that sufficiently reveal rational influences, even though they are not, and cannot be, wholly rational. Society becomes barbarian when men are huddled together under the rule of force and fear; when economic interests assume the primacy over higher values; when material standards of mass and quantity crush out the values of quality and excellence: when technology assumes an autonomous existence and embarks on a course of unlimited self-exploitation without purposeful guidance from the higher disciplines of politics and morals (one thinks of Cape Canaveral); when the state reaches the paradoxical point of being everywhere intrusive and also impotent, possessed of immense power and powerless to achieve rational ends; when the ways of men come under the sway of the instinctual, the impulsive, the compulsive. When things like this happen, barbarism is abroad, whatever the surface impressions of urbanity. Men have ceased to live together accord-

ing to reasonable laws.

Barbarism likewise threatens when men cease to talk together according to reasonable laws. There are laws of argument, the observance of which is imperative if discourse is to be civilized. Argument ceases to be civil when it is dominated by passion and prejudice; when its vocabulary becomes solipsist, premised on the theory that my insight is mine alone and cannot be shared: when dialog gives way to a series of monologues; when the parties to the conversation cease to listen to one another, or hear only what they want to hear, or see the other's argument only through the screen of their own categories; when defiance is flung to the basic ontological principle of all ordered discourse, which asserts that Reality is an analogical structure, within which there are variant modes of reality, to each of which there corresponds a distinctive method of thought that imposes on argument its own special rules. When things like this happen men cannot be locked together in argulune

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ment. Conversation becomes merely quarrelsome or querulous. Civility dies with the death of the dialog.

All this has been said in order to give some meaning to the immediate question before us, sc., whether American society, which calls itself free, is genuinely civil. In any circumstances it has always been difficult to achieve civility in the sense explained. A group of men locked together in argument is a rare spectacle. But within the great sprawling City that is the United States the achievement of a civil society encounters a special difficulty—what is called religious pluralism.

### Religiously Pluralist Society

Problems of the political order were complicated enough for Aristotle, for whom man in the end was only citizen, whose final destiny was to be achieved within the City, however much he might long to play the immortal. For us today man is still citizen; but at least for most of us his life is not absorbed in the City, in society and the state. In the citizen who is also a Christian there resides the consciousness formulated immortally in the second-century Letter to Diognetes: "Every foreign land is a fatherland and every fatherland is a foreign land."

This consciousness makes a difference, in ways upon which we need not dwell here. What makes the more important difference is the fact of religious divisions. Civil discourse would be hard enough if among us there prevailed conditions of religious unity; even in such conditions civic unity would be a complicated and laborious achievement. As it is, efforts at civil discourse plunge us into the twofold experience of the religiously pluralist society.

The first experience is intellectual. As we discourse on public affairs, on the affairs of the commonwealth, and particularly on the problem of consensus, we inevitably have to move upward, as it were, into realms of some theoretical generality-into metaphysics, ethics, theology. This movement does not carry us into disagreement; for disagreement is not an easy thing to reach. Rather, we move into confusion. Among us there is a plurality of universes of discourse. These universes are incommensurable. And when they clash, the issue of agreement or disagreement tends to become irrelevant.

The immediate situation is simply one of confusion. One does not know what the other is talking about. One may distrust what the other is driving at. For this too is part of the problem—the disposition amid the confusion to disregard the immediate argument, as made, and to suspect its tendency, to wonder what the man who makes it is really driving at.

We have no common universe of discourse. In particular, diverse mental equivalents attach to all the words in which the constitutional consensus must finally be discussed—truth, freedom, justice, prudence, order, law, authority, power, knowledge, certainty, unity, peace, virtue,

morality, religion, God, and perhaps even man. Our intellectual experience is one of sheer confusion, in which soliloquy succeeds to argument.

The second experience is even more profound. The themes touched upon in any discussion of religion and the free society have all had a long history. And in the course of discussing them we are again made aware that only in a limited sense have we severally had the same history. We more or less share the short segment of history known as America. But all of us have had longer histories, spiritual and intellectual.

These histories may indeed touch at certain points. But I, for instance, am conscious that I do not share the histories that lie behind many of my fellow citizens. The Jew does not share the Christian history, nor even the Christian idea of history. Catholic and Protestant history may be parallel in a limited sense but they are not coincident or coeval. And the secularist is a latecomer. He may locate his ancestry in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries, or, if his historic sense is strong, he may go back to the fourteenth century, to the rise of what Lagarde has called l'esprit laique. In any case, he cannot go back to Athens, Rome, or Alexandria; for his laicism is historically conditioned. It must situate itself with regard to the Christian tradition. It must include denials and disassociations that the secularism of antiquity did not have to make; and it also includes the affirmation

of certain Christian values that antiquity could not have affirmed.

The fact of our discrepant histories creates the second experience of the pluralist society. We are aware that we not only hold different views but have become different kinds of men as we have lived our several histories. Our styles of thought and of interior life are as discrepant as our histories. The more deeply they are experienced and the more fully they are measured, the more do the differences among us appear to be almost unbridgeable. Man is not only a creature of thought but also a vibrant subject of sympathies; and in the realm of philosophy and religion today the communal experiences are so divergent that they create not sympathies but alienations as between groups.

Take, for instance, the question of natural law. For the Catholic it is simply a problem in metaphysical, ethical and juridical argument; he moves into the argument naturally and feels easy amid its complexities. For the Protestant, on the contrary, the very concept is a challenge, if not an affront, to his whole religiosity, to which it is largely alien and very largely unassimilable.

#### Tax Funds and Education

Another example might be the argument that has been made by Catholics in this country for more than a century with regard to the distribution of tax funds for the support of the school system. The structure of the argument is not complex.

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Its principle is that the canons of distributive justice ought to control the action of government in allocating funds that it coercively collects from all the people in pursuance of its legitimate interest in universal compulsory schooling.

The fact is that these canons are presently not being observed. The "solution" to the School Question reached in the nineteenth century reveals injustice, and the legal statutes that establish the injustice are an abuse of power. So, in drastic brevity, runs the argument. For my part, I have never heard a satisfactory answer to it.

This is a fairly serious situation. When a large section of the community asserts that injustice is being done, and makes a reasonable argument to substantiate the assertion, either the argument ought to be convincingly refuted and the claim of injustice thus disposed of, or the validity of the argument ought to be admitted and the injustice remedied.

As a matter of fact, however, the argument customarily meets a blank stare, or else it is "answered" by varieties of the fallacy known as ignoratio elenchi. At the extreme, from the side of the more careerist type of anti-Catholic, the rejoinder takes this form, roughly speaking (sometimes the rejoinder is roughly spoken): "We might be willing to listen to this argument about the rights of Catholic schools if we believed that Catholic schools had any rights at all. But we do not grant that they have any rights, except to

tolerance. Their existence is not for the advantage of the public; they offend against the integrity of the democratic community, whose warrant is fidelity to Protestant principle (or secularist principle, as the case may be)." This "answer" takes various forms, more or less uncomplimentary to the Catholic Church, according to the temper of the speaker. But this is the gist of it. The statement brings me to my next point.

### **Factual Reality**

The fact is that among us civility—or civic unity or civic amity, as you will—is a thing of the surface. It is quite easy to break through it. And when you do, you catch a glimpse of the factual reality of the pluralist society. I agree with Prof. Eric Voegelin's thesis that our pluralist society has received its structure through wars and that the wars are still going on beneath a fragile surface of more or less forced urbanity. What Voegelin calls the "genteel picture" will not stand the test of confrontation with fact.

We are not really a group of men singly engaged in the search for truth, relying solely on the means of persuasion, entering into dignified communication with each other, content politely to correct opinions with which we do not agree. As a matter of fact, the variant ideas and allegiances among us are entrenched as social powers; they occupy ground; they have developed interests; and they possess the means to fight for them. The real issues of

truth that arise are complicated by secondary issues of power and prestige, which not seldom become pri-

Witness, for instance, Catholic defense of the Connecticut birth-rate control statute.3 It was passed in 1879, in the Comstock era, under Protestant pressure. Its text reveals a characteristic Comstockian ignorance of the rules of traditional jurisprudence; in general, the "free churches" have never understood law but only power, either in the form of majority rule or in the form of minority protest. Since it makes a public crime out of a private sin, and confuses morality with legality, and is unenforceable without police invasion of the bedroom, the statute is indefensible as a law. But the configuration of social power has become such that Catholics now defend it-with a saving sense of irony, I hope.

There are many other examples. What they illustrate is that all the entrenched segments of American pluralism claim influence on the course of events, on the content of the legal order, and on the quality of American society. To each group, of course, its influence seems salvific;

to other groups it may seem merely imperialist. In any case, the forces at work are not simply intellectual; they are also passionate. There is not simply an exchange of arguments but of verbal blows. You do not have to probe deeply beneath the surface of civic amity to uncover the structure of passion and war.

There is the ancient resentment of the Jew, who has for centuries been dependent for his existence on the good will, often not forthcoming, of a Christian community. Now in America, where he has acquired social power, his distrust of the Christian community leads him to align himself with the secularizing forces whose dominance, he thinks, will afford him a security he has never known.

Again, there is the profound distrust between Catholic and Protestant. Their respective conceptions of Christianity are only analogous; that is, they are partly the same and totally different. The result is *odium theologicum*, a sentiment that not only enhances religious differences in the realm of truth but also creates personal estrangements in the order of charity.

More than that, Catholic and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The Connecticut Statute was originally Chapter 78, Public Acts of Connecticut, 1879; it is now Section 8568 of the General Statutes, Revision of 1949. It reads as follows:

Use of drugs or instruments to prevent conception. Any person who shall use any drug, medicinal article or instrument for the purpose of preventing conception shall be fined not less than fifty dollars or imprisoned not less than sixty days nor more than one year or be both fined and imprisoned.

Two decisions have been handed down by the Connecticut Supreme Court of Errors (State v. Nelson, 126 Conn. 412 [1940] and Tileston v. Ullman, 129 Conn. 84 [1942]). Both actions were brought, not under the statute itself, but under the general accessory statute (Section 8875, Revision of 1949). Both decisions carried by a vote of three to two.

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Protestant distrust each other's political intentions. There is the memory of historic clashes in the temporal order; the Irishman does not forget Cromwell any more readily than the Calvinist forgets Louis XIV. Neither Protestant nor Catholic is vet satisfied that the two of them can exist freely and peacefully in the same kind of City. The Catholic regards Protestantism not only as a heresy in the order of religion but also as a corrosive solvent in the order of civilization, whose intentions lead to chaos. The Protestant regards Catholicism not only as idolatry in the order of religion but as an instrument of tyranny in the order of civilization, whose intentions lead to clericalism. Thus an odium civile accrues to the odium theologicum.

This problem is particularly acute in the United States, where the Protestant was the native and the Catholic the immigrant, in contrast to Europe where the Catholic first held the ground and was only later challenged. If one is to believe certain socio-religious critics (Eduard Heimann, for instance) Protestantism in America has forged an identification of itself, both historical and ideological, with American culture, particularly with an indigenous secularist unclarified mystique of individual freedom as somehow the source of everything, including justice, order, and unity.

The result has been Nativism in all its manifold forms, ugly and refined, popular and academic, fanatic and liberal. The neo-Nativist as well as the paleo-Nativist addresses to the Catholic substantially the same charge: "You are among us but you are not of us." (The neo-Nativist differs only in that he uses footnotes, apparently in the belief that reference to documents is a substitute for an understanding of them.) To this charge the Catholic, if he happens to set store, pro forma, on meriting the blessed adjective "sophisticated," will politely reply that that is Jacobinism, nouveau style, and that Jacobinism, any style, is out of style in this day and age. In contrast, the sturdy Catholic War Veteran is more likely to say rudely, "Them's fightin' words." And with this exchange of civilities, if they are such, the "argument" is usually over.

There is, finally, the secularist ( I here use the term only in a descriptive sense). He too is at war. If he knows his own history, he must be. Historically his first chosen enemy was the Catholic Church, and it must still be the Enemy of his choice, for two reasons. First, it asserts that there is an authority superior to the authority of individual reason and of the political projection of individual reason, the state. But this assertion is the first object of the secularist's anathema. Second, it asserts that by divine ordinance this world is to be ruled by a dyarchy of authorities, within which the temporal is subordinate to the spiritual, not instrumentally but in dignity. This assertion is doubly anathema. It clashes with the socio-juridical monism that is always basic to the secularist position when it is consistently argued. In secularist theory there can be only one society, one law, one power, and one faith, a civic faith that is the "unifying" bond of the community, whereby it withstands the assaults of assorted pluralisms.

The secularist has always fought his battles under a banner on which is emblazoned his special device, "The Integrity of the Political Order." In the name of this thundering principle he would banish from the political order (and from education as an affair of the City) all the "divisive forces" of religion. At least in America he has traditionally had no quarrel with religion as a "purely private matter," as a sort of essence or idea or ambient aura that may help to warm the hidden heart of solitary man. He may even concede a place to religion-in-general, whatever that is. What alarms him is religion as a Thing, visible, corporate, organized, a community of thought that presumes to sit superior to, and in judgment on, the "community of democratic thought," and that is furnished somehow with an armature of power to make its thought and judgment publicly prevail. Under this threat he marshals his military vocabulary and speaks in terms of aggression, encroachment, maneuvers, strategy, tactics. He rallies to the defense of the City; he sets about the strengthening of the wall that separates the City from its Enemy. He too is at war.

What it comes to then is that the pluralist society, honestly viewed

under abdication of all false gentility, is a pattern of interesting conspiracies. There are chiefly four—Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, secularist, though in each camp, to continue the military metaphor, there are forces not fully broken to the authority of the high command.

I would like to relieve the word "conspiracy" of its invidious connotations. It is devoid of these in its original Latin sense, both literal and tropical. Literally it means unison, concord, unanimity in opinion and feeling, a "breathing together." Civil society is formed, said Cicero, "conspiratione hominum atque consensu," that is, by action in concert on the basis of consensus with regard to the purposes of the action. Civil society is by definition a conspiracy, "conspiratio plurium in unum." Only by conspiring together do the many become one. E pluribus

Perhaps then our problem today is somehow to make the four great conspiracies among us conspire into one conspiracy that will be American society—civil, just, free, peaceful, one.

Can this problem be solved? My own expectations are modest and minimal. It seems to be the lesson of history that men are usually governed with little wisdom. The highest political good, the unity which is called peace, is far more a goal than a realization. And the search for religious unity, the highest spiritual good, always encounters the "messianic necessity," so called: "Do you think that I have come to bring

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peace on earth? No, but rather dissension (diamerismon)" (Luke 12:51). In the same text the dissension was predicted with terrible explicitness of the family. It has been the constant lot of the family of nations and of the nations themselves. Religious pluralism is against the will of God. But it is the human condition; it is written into the script of history. It will not somehow marvelously cease to trouble the City. We cannot hope to make American society the perfect conspiracy based on a unanimous consensus. But we could at least do two things. We could limit the warfare, and we could enlarge the dialog. We could lay down our arms (at least the more barbarous kind of arms!), and we could take up argument.

Even to do this would not be easy. It would be necessary that we cease to project into the future of the Republic the nightmares, real or fancied, of the past. In Victorian England John Henry Newman noted that the Protestant bore "a stain upon the imagination," left there by the vivid images of Reformation polemic against the Church of Rome. Perhaps we all bear some stain or other upon our imaginations. It might be possible to cleanse them by a work of reason. The free society, I said at the outset, is a unique realization; it has inaugurated a new history. Therefore it might be possible within this new history to lay the ghosts of the past —to forget the ghettos and the autosda-fé, the Star Chamber and the Committee on the Public Safety; Topcliffe with his "Bloody Question" and Torquemada with his rack; the dragonnades and the Black and Tans; Samuel F. B. Morse, the convents in Charleston and Philadelphia, the Know-Nothings and the Ku Klux Klan and what happened to Al Smith (whatever it was that did happen to him).

All this might be possible. It certainly would be useful. I venture to say that today it is necessary. This period in American history is critical, not organic (to use Prof. Toynbee's distinction). We face a crisis that is new in history. We would do well to face it with a new cleanliness of imagination, in the realization that internecine strife, beyond some inevitable human measure, is a prohibitive luxury we can no longer afford to enjoy.

Serious issues confront us on all the three levels of public argument. Perhaps the time has come when we should endeavor to dissolve the structure of war that underlies the pluralistic society, and erect the more civilized structure of the dialog. It would be no less sharply pluralistic, but rather more so, since the real pluralisms would be clarified out of their present confusion. And amid the pluralism a unity would be discernible-the unity of an orderly conversation. The pattern would not be that of ignorant armies clashing by night but of informed men locked together in argument in the full light of a new dialectical day. Thus we might present to a "candid world" the spectacle of a civil society.

The university must reckon with the factual pluralism of American society, insofar as this pluralism is real and not illusory. There can be no question of any bogus irenicism or of the submergence of religious differences in a vague haze of "fellowship."

# The State University in a Pluralist Society

7E ARE not here concerned with all the pluralisms, proper to the political community as such, which have the sanction of the central tradition of politics in the West. The distinction between Church and State, and between State and society, entail a pluralistic organization of the community. And this pluralism becomes more complex through the existence within the community of a whole range of institutions that come into being under the operation of the principle of natural association (e.g., the family) or free association (e.g., all

manner of social, economic, cultural, and academic associations).

Our question, however, concerns a society that is pluralistic in consequence of multiple conceptions of, and answers to, what are usually called the Ultimate Questions. In this sense societies in the past have been pluralist in manifold fashion. Thus the ancient Christian Empire, with its divisions between Arian or Nestorian and Catholic Christianity; thus too the post-Reformation and post-Revolution "Catholic nation," so called, within which there existed a plurality of attitudes toward the

<sup>\*</sup>Reprinted from Religion and the State University, edited by Erich A. Walter, University of Michigan Press, 1958.

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Catholic Church, ranging from the most devout fidelity out to the extremes of anticlericalism in the Continental sense.

Our current American plaralism, however, has its own quality. Basically, I should say that it is related to the kind of Ultimate Questions that have become the typical concern of modernity as such. All of them are related to the central question, what is man? Thence they

proliferate.

What is the rank of man within the order of being, if there is an order of being? Is the nature of man simply continuous with the nature of the cosmic universe, to be understood in terms of its laws, whatever they may be? Or is there a discontinuity between man and the rest of nature, in consequence of the fact that the nature of man is spiritual in a unique sense? What is man's destiny, his summum bonum? Is it to be found and fulfilled within terrestrial history, or does it lie beyond time in "another world"? What is the "sense" of history, its direction and meaning and finality? Or is the category of "finality" meaningless? What can a man know? What do you mean when you say, "I know"? What manner of certitude or certainty attaches to human knowledge? Is knowledge a univocal term, or are there diverse modes and degrees of knowledge, discontinuous one from another? Can man's knowledge-and also his love-reach to realities that are transcendent to the world of matter, space, and time? Is there a God? What is Goda Person, a Power, or simply a projection of man's own consciousness? Does God have a care for man? Has God entered the world of human history there to accomplish a "redemption"? Is the theological concept of "salvation" only a reassuring ambiguity? Or has it a content that is at once mysterious and intelligible? What mental equivalents attach to all the words that have been the currency of civilized discourse-freedom, justice, order, law, authority, power, peace, virtue, morality, religion?

All these questions, and others related to them, concern the essentials of human existence. The multiplicity of answers to them, and of ways of refusing them, is in general what we mean by modern pluralism. Integral to the pluralism is the agnostic view that it is useless or illegitimate even to ask questions that are Ultimate.

How did our American pluralist society come to be? To answer the question would be to write the history of what is called "modernity." One would have to begin by deciding whether modernity began with the rise of Gnosticism in the second century or with the fall of Constantinople in the fifteenth century. One would also have to situate American society as in many respects a special type of realization, within the wider context of the modern world. Declining these extensive tasks, I shall be content with one central observation, which I borrow from Professor Eric Voegelin.

It is his contention-and I agree with it-that the pluralist structure

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of our contemporary society did not come into existence through a "peaceful" development. The historical forces that contributed to the development were not only intellectual but also passionate. They were not only resident in men whose names we know; they were also to some considerable extent anonymous, with the strange anonymity that attaches to forces that are organized. Had the dynamism of development not been thus complex, it would not have been successful.

Moreover, I would further agree with Voegelin's description of the end-result of the development as stated in terms of what he calls the "hard facts concerning the texture of opinion in contemporary democratic societies." "We are not dealing, he says, "with human beings who hold this or that opinion as individuals, but with Christians and secularists: not with Christians, but with Catholics and Protestants; not with plain liberals, but with Christians and secular liberals; not with plain secular liberals, but with old-style liberals of the free-enterprise type and modern liberals of the socialist type; and so forth. This rich diversification of socially entrenched and violently vociferous opinion is what we call our pluralistic society. It has received its structure through wars, and these wars are still going on. The genteel picture of a search for truth in which humankind is engaged with the means of peaceful persuasion, in dignified communication and correction of opinions, is utterly at variance with the facts."

#### The University

I note this view for a reason. The "genteel picture" is not seldom put forward to describe the university, whose spiritual situation within modern pluralist society is sometimes said to be therefore privileged. However, the picture in its gentility does not fit the facts of this situation. One does not have to probe very deep below the urbanities of university life to find oneself in the midst of the many-sided and confused "religious wars" that in their unbloody form are at once the heritage of modernity from its bloody past and also the essence of modernity itself.

I do not deplore this fact. If the university takes its own function seriously, it ought to find itself in the characteristically modern situation of religious conflict, understanding the adjective to mean conflict on basic issues, conflict that is at once intellectual and passionate, a clash both of individual minds and of organized opinions.

What I would deplore would be any refusal on the part of the university (and the university sometimes makes this refusal) to recognize its own spiritual and intellectual situation. The university would succumb to a special type of neurotic disorder if it were to cultivate an inflated image of itself as somehow standing in all serenity "above" the religious wars that rage beneath the surface of modern life and as somehow privileged to disregard these conflicts as irrelevant to its "search for truth."

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To cast up this "genteel picture" of itself would be to indulge in a flight from reality. The only inner disorder that would be worse than this would be a flight to the fantasy that the university is omnicompetent to judge the issues of truth involved in all the pluralisms of contemporary society.

#### Problems of Pluralism

If pluralism in the sense explained is the characteristic fact of contemporary society, it is also the original root of certain problems that are no less characteristic. An increasing preoccupation with the problematic aspects of pluralism is indeed one of the most interesting phenomena of the present time, which distinguishes it from the heyday of classical liberalism, when man's faith in the assumptions, spoken and unspoken, of an extreme individualism was still unshaken.

For instance, it used to be assumed, as a cardinal merit of a pluralist society, that the truth would always be assured of conquest if only it were subjected to the unbridled competition in the market place of ideas. But it is now no longer possible to cherish this naiveté.

For further instance, it used to be assumed that an ever-expanding variety of conflicting religious and philosophical views was per se an index of richness, a pledge of vitality, a proof of the values of individualism, a guarantee against stagnation, and so on. But history has not left this assumption intact.

In a word, it used to be assumed

that pluralism represented "progress." But now the question has arisen, whether its proliferation may be causatively related to certain observable decadences within the area of intellectual life. A few might be mentioned, but without any intention of exploring here the whole subject.

There is, for instance, the advance of solipsism, the view that my insight is mine alone and cannot be shared by another, much less by a community; this view is, of course, the destruction of the classical and Christian concept of reason. There is the dissolution of the ancient idea of the unity of truth, a unity that admits and demands distinctions and differentiations interior to itself, in consequence of which the concept of truth acquires an inner architecture whose structural elements are articulated in accord with a hierarchical principle. There is the consequent dissolution of the idea of truth itself to the point where no assertion may claim more than the status of sheer opinion, to be granted an equality of freedom with any other opinion.

In further consequence there has occurred the dispersal into meaning-lessness of all that Socrates meant by the "order of the soul." Then too there has occurred that drastic contraction of the dimensions of reason, that severe devaluation of intelligence which usually goes by the name of "scientism," or, if you will, "positivism"—the theory that "truth" is an univocal term, and that the single technique valid in

the "search" for truth is the empirical method of science. This theory is the denial of the possibility of philosophy in the meaning that the word has had since Plato.

Other, and not unrelated, decadences come to mind. There is, for instance, the loss of a common universe of discourse which alone makes argument possible; and there is the consequent decay of argument and the corruption of controversy, amid the sterilities of stock polemical attacks and counterattacks, or amid the bottomless morasses of semanticism.

But perhaps the ultimate tendency of the pluralisms created by the era of modernity is felt rather in the realm of effectivity than in the realm of reason as such. The fact today is not simply that we hold different views but that we have become different types of men, with different styles of interior life, The gulfs of division, fairly measured, appear almost unbridgeable, not least because man is more than a thinking animal; he is also a creature of sympathies. And the communal experiences today, in the area of religion and philosophy, are so diverse that they create not sympathies but alienations between groups.

#### End of An Era

My suggestion then is that the problem of pluralism has begun to appear in a new light. Perhaps the basic reason for this is the fact that we are entering a new era. Whether it will be a better or even a good era is another question that still remains open. In any case, we have reached the end of the era that gave itself the qualification "modern."

This observation is not original. A Catholic theologian, Romano Guardini, has written a book entitled Das Ende der Neuzeit. A Protestant philosopher, William Ernest Hocking, has defined today's problem as the "passage beyond modernity." A political scientist, Eric Voegelin, has pointed to the fact that the reduction of man, from image of God down to a mass of biological drives, has "run its whole gamut"; and he has drawn the conclusion that this fact is "for the social scientist the most important index that 'modernity' has run its course." A historian, Geoffrey Barraclough, has done an essay with the title, "The End of European History," meaning in context the end of the history of modern Europe. A Protestant theologian, Paul Tillich, has put forward the thesis that in some identifiable sense an end has been put to what he calls the "Protestant era," which was itself an important aspect of modernity. Arnold Toynbee has gone so far as to popularize the notion that our present era is not only postmodern but also post-Christian.

If these observers, whose points of view are so diverse, may claim credence, it follows that we confront a whole new set of problems. There is, of course, the problem of salvaging those elements of truth and moral value which gave vitality to the whole movement called "modernity." But my question concerns

only the manifold pluralisms, in the sense explained, which have been the special creation of modernity. With the dissolution of the age that made them, are these pluralisms somehow and to some extent to be unmade?

It would seem that the process of unmaking them is already importantly afoot. Protestantism, for instance, now feels its own inner discordant pluralisms as no longer an unqualified glory but as something of a scandal. And in the Ecumenical Movement it is in quest of its own unities. Catholicism in turn now feels that certain of its past unities were something of a scandal; there is, for instance, the unity asserted in Belloc's famous thesis that "Europe is the faith and the faith is Europe." In consequence the Church is asserting with sharper emphasis its own proper sacramental unity, altogether universal, altogether spiritual, not enfeoffed to any historical culture but transcendent to every culture at the same time that it is a leaven in all cultures.

Again, Europe has realized that its modern pluralisms of many kinds, of which it was once boastfully jealous, are importantly the cause of its own present impotence. The "good European" has now emerged, and his quest is for some manner and measure of unity that will begin for Europe a new history and regain for it a due share of its lost significance in the realm of historical action. The Communist too, whether Soviet or Chinese, cherishes his own dream of a demonic uni-

fication of the world. And in the United States, finally the problem of unity in its relation to the pluralisms of American society has begun to be felt with a new seriousness.

#### Reality of the Problem

True enough, the problem is not seldom raised in a way that is false. One thinks, for instance, of the New Nativism, as represented by Mr. Paul Blanshard; or of the issue of "conformism," about which there is so much confused talk; or of the current anxieties about internal subversion, regarded as a threat to an American unity ("there are those among us who are not of us"). And so on. But even the falsities attendant upon the manner in which the issue of unity-amid-pluralism is raised bear witness to the reality of the issue itself.

The question has been asked: How much of the pluralism is bogus and unreal? And how much of the unity is likewise bogus—and undesirable? The more general question has also been asked: How much pluralism, and what kinds of pluralism, can a pluralist society stand? And conversely, how much unity, and what kind of unity, does a pluralist society at all, effectively organized for responsible action in history, and yet a "free" society?

Similarly, certain words have now acquired a respectability that was long denied them—the word "order," for instance, which now is disjunctively coupled with the word "freedom," with the fading of the typical-

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ly modern illusion that somehow "freedom" is itself the principle of order.

Finally, responsible and informed thinkers can now discourse about the "public philosophy" of America, considering it to be a valid concept which furnishes the premises for dissent, to be identified as dissent even though the public philosophy itself contains no tenets that would justify coercion of the dissenter. In the same fashion serious inquiries are now made into the American consensus-the question being not whether such a thing exists but what it is and whence it came and how it may be kept alive and operative by argument among reasonable men. Moreover, since every social consensus that supports and directs the historical action of a given political community is always, to a considerable extent, a legacy from an earlier age, questions have been asked about the American heritage and about the manner in which it has developed. Has the America of today been true to its own spiritual origins? Indeed, were the principles that lay at its origins ambiguous to some extent, so as to permit various lines of development, not all of them happy? Is the American man of today an "exile from his own past" (as Goeffrey Brunn said of European man)?

The central point here is that the quest for unity-amid-pluralism has assumed a new urgency in the mind of post-modern man.

In this connection it might be well to advert to the fact that, since St. Augustine's description of the "two cities," it has been realized that societal unity may, broadly speaking, be of two orders—the divine or the demonic.

It is of the divine order when it is the product of faith, reason, freedom, justice, law, and love. Within the social unity created by these forces, which are instinct with all the divinity that resides in man, the human personality itself grows to its destined stature of dignity at the same time that the community achieves its unity.

Societal unity is of the demonic order when it is the product of force, whether the force be violent or subtle. There are, for instance, all the kinds of force that operate in the industrial society created by modernity (irrational political propaganda, commercial advertising, all the assaults upon reason and taste that are launched by mass amusements, and the like). These forces operate under the device of "freedom," but unto the disintegration of the human personality, and unto the more or less forcible unification of social life on a level lower than that established, forever, by Aristotle's "reasonable man" and his Christian completion. The quest for unity-amid-pluralism must therefore be critical of its own impulses. Its stimulus must not be passion, whether the passion be imperialist (the will to power) or craven (fear and anxiety).

What then might be the attitudes and functions of the university in the face of the problem of pluralism

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as newly presented at the outset of the post-modern era? The premise of the question is the fact that the basic issues have come to matter to men in a new way. Does this fact matter to the university? Many of the commitments of modernityshared by the university, because it too has been modern-have dissolved in disenchantment. Does their dissolution make any difference to the university? The positivistic universe (if the phrase be not a contradiction in adiecto) has come to seem a wilderness of disorder to the soul of man, which cannot be content to live in chaos since it is always aware, however dimly, that it is natively committed to the discovery of an order in reality or, alternatively, to the imposition of an order on reality at whatever cost both to reality and to itself. Is post-modern man's new commitment to order of any interest to the university?

I know, of course, that the word "commitment," used in regard to a university, raises specters. I am not myself fond of the word; it is more distinctively part of the Protestant vocabulary, which is not mine; and moreover the dictionary adds to its definitions: "... esp. to prison"!

In any case, some nice questions center around the word. Is the university, as a matter of fact, uncommitted? And in what senses or in what directions? Is "noncommittalism" an intellectual virtue or is it what Gordon Keith Chalmers called it, a "sin"? Is a commitment to "freedom," understanding "freedom" to be a purely formal category, any

more a valid premise of the intellectual life than a commitment to the Kantian Moralprinzip, understood as a purely formal category, is a valid premise for the moral life? "Handle so . . ." Indeed. But what am I to do? And analogously in the former case, what is this "truth" for which I am to be "free" to search?

#### The University's Commitment

Leaving these interesting questions aside, I might better come to more concrete matters and venture a few assertions of a practical kind. First, I venture to assert that the university is committed to the task of putting an end, as far as it can, to intellectual savagery in all its forms, including a major current form, which is the savagery of the American student (perhaps the professor?) who in all matters religious and theological is an untutored child of the intellectual wilderness. Again, the university is committed to the task of putting an end to prejudice based on ignorance, by helping to banish the ignorance. Unless indeed the university wishes to commit itself to the prejudice that religious knowledge is really ignorance.

The assertion I chiefly wish to venture, however, is that the university is committed to its students and to their freedom to learn. Its students are not abstractions. And whatever may be the university's duty (or right, or privilege, or sin) of noncommittalism, the fact is that many of its students are religiously committed. To put it concretely, they believe in God. Or to put it

even more concretely, they are Protestants, Catholics, Jews. The university as such has no right to judge the validity of any of these commitments, so called. Similarly, it has no right to ignore the fact of these commitments, much less to require that—for the space, say, of four years—its students should be content to become scientific naturalists within the university, whatever else they, somewhat schizophrenically, may choose to be ouside its walls.

The major issue here is the student's freedom to learn-to explore the full intellectual dimensions of the religious faith to which he is committed. He comes to college with the "faith of the charcoal burner." of course. And it is the right of the university to require that his quest of religious knowledge should be pursued in the university style-under properly qualified professors, in course of high academic content, in accordance with the best methods of theological scholarship, and so on. But this right of the university should itself conspire with the student's own freedom to learn, so as to create the academic empowerment that is presently almost wholly lacking. A college and university student is academically empowered to grow in all dimensions of knowledge-except the dimensions of religious knowledge.

What is the formula for translating the student's freedom to learn about his religious faith into a genuine empowerment? The question would have to be argued; and it

might not be possible to devise a uniformly applicable formula.

In any case, the formula of the "religious emphasis week" is hopelessly inadequate; and when it becomes simply a piece of public relations it is also unworthy of a university. Again, the formula of a "department of religion" is no good, unless the "religion" of the department includes the major historic faiths, which is rarely the case. As for a "department of religion and philosophy," it chiefly serves to confuse the issue. In its most destructive concrete mode of operation it blurs the clear line of distinction that traditional Christianity has drawn between the order of faith and the order of reason. (Incidentally, it is not for the university to say that this line ought to be blurred, or moved from its traditional position.)

Whatever the concrete formula may be, it must reckon with the factual pluralism of American society, insofar as this pluralism is real and not illusory. There can be no question of any bogus irenicism or of the submergence of religious differences in a vague haze of "fellowship." And here, lest what I said above about the "unmaking" of modern pluralism should be misunderstood. I should add a clarification. It is not, and cannot be, the function of the university to reduce modern pluralism to unity. However, it might be that the university could make some contribution to a quite different task-namely, the reduction of modern pluralism to intelligibility.

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#### An Intellectual Task

This is an intellectual task. It bears upon the clarification of the pluralism itself. The Protestant charcoal burner today knows well enough that he differs from the Catholic charcoal burner, and vice versa. But it is not so certain that either could say why, in any articulate fashion. And if one or the other should undertake to give reasons, they would probably be mistaken, or distorted, or unclear, or even irrelevant. Anyone who has attended a run-of-the-mill college "bull session" will know this.

From this point of view I would specify two general academic objectives that a college or university could legitimately aim at in the field of religious knowledge as its contribution to a clarification of the problem of pluralism.

The first is a genuine understanding of the epistemology of religious truth-or, if you will, of the nature of religious faith. It is precisely here that modern pluralism has its roots. Karl Barth was making this point when he said, in effect, that it is no use discussing whether we believe in common certain articles of the creed, when we are in radical disagreement on what is the meaning of the word with which the creed begins, "Credo." It is in consequence of this radical disagreement that Catholicism and Protestantism appear as, and are, systems of belief that bear to each other only an analogical relationship. That is to say, they are somewhat the same,

and totally different. One would expect the mature Catholic and Protestant mind to understand this fact, which takes a bit of understanding.

The second understanding—and academic objectives can be stated only in terms of understanding—would be of the systems of belief, precisely as systems, in their inner organic consistency (whatever it may be), and in their relation to other areas of human knowledge (insofar as these relations are intellectually discernible).

These two objectives are not unworthy of an institution of higher learning. They also coincide with the objectives that the student should be made free to reach. If he did reach them, he would be on emergence from college less a rustic than when he entered. And would not his college gently rejoice? The preservation of rusticities can hardly rank high among the preoccupations of the college dean.

When considered in terms of these two objectives, the practical difficulties appear less formidable than they are sometimes thought to be. There may indeed be some three hundred religious bodies in America. But there are not that many "styles" of religious belief. In fact, there are generically only three—the Protestant, the Catholic, and the Jewish. They are radically different "styles" and no one of them is reducible, or perhaps even comparable, to any of the others. And in each case the style of the epistemology is related

to the structure of the theology (or possibly to the absence of a the-

ology).

The academic content of possible courses would be no great problem, except as it involves selection from a wealth of materials. The Catholic theological tradition is a treasury that even lifelong study cannot exhaust. Judaism has its learning, rich and venerable. And today the Protestant has the task of assimilating the already great, and still growing, body of ecumenical theology. No college or university should have to worry about its academic standards if it were to turn its students loose, under expert guidance, into these three great storehouses of thought.

Under expert guidance—that might be the greatest practical problem. Specially trained men would be needed. One could only hope that they would become available as opportunities opened before them. For the rest, I should only insist on one principle. It was stated by John Stuart Mill when he said that every position should be explained and defended by a man who holds it, and who therefore is able to make the case for it most competently. This is, in a special way, a restatement of the principle upon which St. Augustine tirelessly dwelt: "Nisi credideritis, non intelligetis." The communication of understanding supposes its possession.

I do not myself accept the pedagogical canon that seems to be popular in university circles: every position ought to be explained by one who is sympathetic with it but who personally rejects it. It has never seemed to me that this is a canon of "objectivity" at all. Nor does it insure the communication of a critical understanding of the position in question, given the principle that only an immanent critique, as it is called, can lead to this desirable type of understanding. In any case, my own view is that the only path to genuine understanding of a religious faith lies through the faith itself. The possession of the faith is therefore the proper qualification of the professor who would wish to communicate a critical understanding of it.

These are but a few practical suggestions toward a definition of the role of the university in the face of the problem of pluralism today. In conclusion, it should go without saying that the function of the university is not at all messianic. It is entirely minimal. The basic issues, deeply considered, do in the end raise in the mind of man the issue of "salvation." But if post-modern man hopes for salvation, he must set his hope elsewhere than on the university. Henry Adam's gratitude to Harvard for its contribution to his intellectual development is the highest gratitude that the university can merit from man in search of salvation. Harvard, said Adams in effect, did not get in my way. But this is no small cause for gratitude when the issue at stake is salvation.

What the human spirit endowed with Christian faith permanently needs is that all its knowledge should ultimately be seen as one; for truth to the Christian is ultimately a word that has no plural, despite the distinctnesses that stand within its infinitude.

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# The Catholic University in a Pluralist Society

THE reflection that is going on in St. Louis University during these days centers on the concept of responsibility. The administration, the faculty, and the students of the university have, of course, many varied responsibilities. But if I had to state in a sentence, as a generalization, what the responsibility of the university is, I think I should say that it is a responsibility for intellectual order, for the order of truth—or more exactly, for the unity of truth.

Stated as a generalization, the idea may seem tame, vague, jejune, perhaps unreal. To see how audacious it is, how exciting and how dynamic, perhaps we ought to go back for a minute to the man who was the first in our Christian era to grasp the problem of the unity of truth and to accept responsibility for attempting its solution. I mean, of course, Adamantius Origen, the genius who towers over the third century—indeed over all of Christian antiquity.

His story starts, modestly enough, in 203 A.D., when Demetrius, Bishop of Alexandria, put him in charge of the diocesan catechesis, at the age of 18. Doubtless the bishop had no

OAn address delivered during the observance of Founder's Day, St. Louis University, St. Louis, Mo., November 15-16, 1955.

intention of starting an intellectual revolution; that is not the sort of thing that bishops ordinarily do. But Origen happened to be a genius. And a particular moment in history had arrived. The time was at hand when the Church had to move onward from the preaching of the Word in all the simplicity of its divine wisdom, out into the complex world of human intelligence where many words, pretending to be wise, were being spoken. Origen was the man who made this crucial move.

His initial task was spiritually exciting but not intellectually ambitious. He taught the elements of Christian doctrine to catechumens preparing for baptism in the shadow of the edict of Septimius Severus which threatened death to Christian converts. In time, however, a problem arose that was also intellectually exciting. "When I devoted myself to the Word," Origen wrote, "and the fame of my proficiency went abroad, there came to me adherents of the various schools of thought, and men conversant with Greek learning, particularly with philosophy. It seemed therefore necessary that I should examine the doctrines of the schools and see what the philosophers had said concerning the truth." In this simple, almost casual way Origen describes the beginning of the great historic encounter between Christianity and the ancient world of intellect.

Consider Origen's problem. The men who came to him, wanting to be Christians, were living in the seething heterogeneity of contentious cultures, philosophies, and pieties that was third-century Alexandria. They had frequented the famous Museum and its fabulous library—the twin institutions that together had made Alexandria the capital of "the creative half of the Empire." These cultivated men—Egyptians, Jews, Greeks, Romans, Orientals—were troubled and confused as they heard Origen discourse on the Christian creed and on the history behind it.

Their philosophy raised questions about God and immortality, the finite and the infinite, the nature of morality and of the good life. Their nascent science of philology created difficulties about the text of Scripture and the history it told. They knew some science and consequently had questions about the Christian view of the material universe. They were skilled in politics and law and therefore were desirous to know the situation of the Church. visible as an institution with its own structure of government, in the face of the Empire. The great desire for redemption from evil that had become central in all the religions of the time had touched them, and they had questions about the Christian interpretation of evil and the Christian meaning of grace and redemption. They were men to whom Hellenism had taught the primacy of the life of reason; how then was their love of intelligence to be reconciled with the obedience of Christian faith and the acceptance of great mysteries? Their Roman

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ideal of citizenship; but was there a relation between the service of an earthly City and a citizenship in the Kingdom of God? And did the ascetic other worldliness of the Christian life leave a place for the art and music and literature that they had learned to love?

In short, these men were asking one searching question: What is the relation between the Museum of Alexandria and the Church of Christ? It was a most valid question, that demanded an answer. A journey to Rome about 212 A.D. further convinced Origen that Christianity was challenging the best intelligence of the time and was in turn being challenged, either with hope or with hostility. Therefore on his return to Alexandria he reorganized his catechesis into a didascalia, a proper school, and embarked upon the program of which Charles Bigg, in his Bampton Lectures. The Christian Platonists of Alexandria, has said: "It may be doubted whether any nobler scheme of Christian education has ever been projected."

Eusebius has left us a brief description of what went on. I shall omit the first or lower level of the program, the training of youth in those arts and sciences which made "the free man and the citizen." This general education, Origen told students, "would be no small help to them in the study and understanding of the divine Scriptures." What concerns us more narrowly here is the second or higher level of the program. Eusebius reports: "When he perceived that any persons had

superior intelligence, he instructed them also in philosophic disciplines."

In this part of his task Origen came to grips with the problem of the day. Christianity, he knew, was not the Grecian art of being human; nor was it a sentimental touch of universal brotherhood added to a Roman ideal of citizenship; least of all was it some selfauthenticating individual inner experience of "salvation," that stood in no intelligible relation to what the Alexandrian Museum was thinking and saying. Christianity was fundamentally a Word, a doctrine, a gnosis (so Origen called it), a knowledge that is also the law of life, normative in all the problems of human thought and purpose. Christianity presumed to occupy intellectual ground; but it found this ground to no small extent already occupied.

There was the ancient lore of Egypt and the East; there was the revealed wisdom and sacred law of the Jew; above all, there was Greek reason and "all that the philosophers had said concerning truth." The problem was not some rude dispossession of these tenants. The Library of Alexandria was not to be burnt, as Justinian later thought, in a stupidity of zeal rather Vandal or Mohammedan than Christian. The question, as Clement of Alexandria had already put it, was whether there is "one river of Truth": whether the two Testaments are finally One; whether the Logos, the Word, who had come as Christ to be the Light of the World, was not somehow also the light that had beckoned to the soul of Egypt, burst upon the Prophets, and illumined the intelligence of Greece. The question was whether Christianity, like Christ, was the Truth in which all truths are ultimately One.

This was the ultimate question with which Origen's best students were put to wrestle, and he with them as their guide. He was, as Eusebius notes, "celebrated as a great philosopher even among the Greeks themselves." And his first step with his students is described by one of them, Gregory of Neocaesarea, a lawyer and later a bishop, in the famous Paneguric of Origen that was his valedictory to his alma mater and its master: "He introduced us to all schools of thought and was determined that we should be ignorant of no type of Greek doctrine," Stoic, Pythagorean, Platonist-all except the Epicureans, who, as atheists, had no answers to the question a Christian might ask and asked no questions a Christian had not already answered. "Nothing," Gregory writes, "was forbidden us, nothing hidden from us, nothing inaccessible to us. We were to learn all manner of doctrinebarbarian or Greek, mystical or political, divine or human. We went into and examined with entire freedom all sorts of ideas, in order to justify ourselves and enjoy to the full these goods of the mind. When an ancient thought was true, it belonged to us and was at our disposition with all its marvelous possibilities of delightful contemplation.

And he himself went on with us . . . directing us, pointing out to us all that was true and useful, and putting aside all that was false."

Gregory's account catches something of the excitement of the years he spent with Origen. There is the excitement inherent in the free search of the mind for truth, wherever it may be found. There is the even greater excitement inherent in the mind's search for order, for the relation of truth to truth, for the inner hidden unity that must somehow join in a many-splendored pattern all the fragments of truth, human and divine, that the intelligence of man can encompass.

#### Today's Encounter

The first Christian school of Alexandria accepted responsibility for filling an inner need of the human spirit as it was caught in the clashing encounter between the gnosis of Christianity and all the knowledge symbolized by the Museum. Leave Alexandria and come now to St. Louis. You find that this encounter is permanently joined. The Church is a permanent institution. The Museum too endures in other forms. vaster and more learned than ever. And the responsibility that falls on St. Louis University is the same one that Origen accepted. What the human spirit endowed with Christian faith permanently needs is that all its knowledges, acquired within the Church and within the Museum, should ultimately be seen as one; for truth to the Christian is ultimately a word that has no plural, lune

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despite all the distinctnesses that stand, unconfused, within the compass of its unconfined infinitude.

In 1955 one might well quail before the immensity of this responsibility. It is now some five hundred years since the early origins of what Lagarde called, rather untranslateably, l'esprit laique. Since that time the human intelligence in the West has more and more firmly chosen, as the single field for the exercise of its powers, this terrestrial world and the phenomena and events observable in it, whether in the realm of nature or in the secular story of man. All that is transcendent to this terrestrial orb has, by that same token, been regarded as beyond intelligence and therefore no object of concern.

In consequence a gigantic divorce operation has gone on. The truths of Christian faith and their prolongation—theology—have been divorced from all the things that men think about and do, from morality, philosophy, politics, law economics, science, technology, medicine, psychiatry, art and the creative imagination, poetry, drama—and even sport. We stand today at the end of a lengthy process of disintegration that has sundered from one another all the activities of human reason.

The first casualty of the process has been the idea of the unity of truth. A second has been the idea of truth itself. But perhaps the ultimate and most disastrous casualty has been the very idea of intelligence, the very idea of the life of reason. Ernest Nagel in his book,

Sovereign Reason, dwells on the considerations that, as he says, "have contributed to the formation of a naturalistic conception of human reason and scientific intelligence." And he adds:

The achievements of science are the products of a cooperative social enterprise, which has refined and extended skills encountered in the meanest employments of the human intellect. The principles of human reason, far from representing the immutable traits of all possible being, are socially cultivated standards of competent intellectual workmanship. The life of reason as embodied in the community of scientific effort is thus a pattern of life that generates an autonomous yet controlling idea . . . To many commentators, the ideals realized in the enterprise of science are also the ideals which are indispensable to the successful operation of any society of free men.

The essential implications of this statement are clear: the highest form of human rationality is displayed in the methods of science; the life of reason is par excellence the life of the scientific intelligence; the hope of society depends upon "the extension of the habits of scientific intelligence to every stratum of communal life and to every form of social organization."

These propositions would be accepted, I think, by all the adherents of the philosophical school called critical naturalism or contestualistic naturalism. The new naturalism represents the most sophisticated philosophical result, so far achieved, of the dominant experience of modern life—the experience of Science. In

one sense this new naturalism represents an advance over the now discredited naive positivisms and pragmatisms of the last century. It is a far more respectable adversary than any recently encountered by our own Christian naturalism.

But in another sense it exhibits most clearly the decadence of the notion of intelligence in our day. Inherent in the system is the denial of the possibility of true metaphysical experience, as a Scholastic understands the term. Also inherent in the system is a denial that religious experience can have any intellectual content whatsoever. Any effort to give an intellectual structure to Christian faith is either sheer obscurantism or mere fantasy. The import of these denials is enormous. The dimensions of intelligence are diminished and contracted. An effort is made to organize the life of reason on a level of rationality demonstrably lower than the level already achieved in history by philosophic reason. And this inferior rationality is put forward as the proper instrument for the organization of the social life of man.

### Magnitude of the Task

My purpose is not to analyze in detail the intellectual temper of to-day; many of you can do that much better than I. My wish was simply to illustrate the magnitude of the task that confronts us, when we accept our responsibility for the unity of truth. The task is so great that one ought to be quite modest about the prospects of accomplishment.

What concretely can we do, here in America, in a pluralist society that almost by definition rejects the ideal of a unity of truth, and in a technological society that has lost its grip on the full dimensions of intelligence and is willing to consent to an ideal of rational life that is something less than fully reasonable?

First of all, we cannot write a Summa of Human Knowledge in this our age. We cannot bring everything together all at once. Perhaps the best we can do is piecework, as it were. Some of this work of bringing at least a few things together is presently going on. There is, for instance, the effort at a reconciliation of religion and psychiatry-the effort to relate the clinical techniques and findings of modern psychology to a true religious and philosophical understanding of the nature of man. There could be an effort to relate the philosophy of natural law to the practical problems of law and to the constitution of legal systems. Natural law is an application of the principle of the unity of truth to the field of "legal" law.

There could be a further effort to relate the economic experience of man more closely to the totality of his human experience—especially his experience of human purposes higher than any purpose pursued in his economic life. This effort will be of increasing importance in the years just ahead of us. Recent technological developments make it certain—as certain as any aspects of the human condition are ever cer-

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tain-that men in the future will have much more freedom from economic pressures than in the past. They will be less able to seek their fulfillment, as many today do, within the economic process itself. What, for instance, will be the drive of the "work-imperative" in the age which Dr. von Neumann of the AEC has recently sketched-an age in which power will be free, "as free as the unmetered air." In view of this development a reconsideration of the relationship of economics to the ideals of human life seems to be more urgent than ever.

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY IN A PLURALIST SOCIETY

Other bits of piece work could easily be suggested-even apart from the piece of work that can hardly be called piece work, since it goes so close to the heart of the problem today. I mean the constitution of a valid philosophy of science-not least perhaps in its epistemological aspects. All this difficult work would be a demonstration that the intellectual tradition to which we belong has not lost its ancient genius-its genius at uniting new things and old within its ever widening orbit.

Mention of this intellectual tradition calls to mind another continuing task. Prof. John Nef speaks somewhere of "the loss of the common cultural inheritance in the intellectual sense, which among the learned and cultured down to the nineteenth century." This loss is a frightening one today; because in losing this cultural inheritance men are deprived of a common universe of discourse within which they may meaningfully talk together. This loss of a common language, expressing concepts on whose meaning there is mutual agreement, makes any kind of theological dialog between Catholic and Protestant today well nigh impossible. Dialog is likewise difficult in other fields. This fact of presentday life illuminates the importance of our continued devotion to the ideals of liberal education, which is the initiation of the individual into mankind's common intellectual patrimony whose possession is the mark of the civilized intelligence and the condition of intellectual intercourse.

In fine, within today's conditions perhaps the major responsibility of the Catholic university is to continue to represent the idea of the unity of truth. What is chiefly important is that the idea itself should "there," somehow visible because it visibly animates an institution. The unity of truth is never finally constituted; all past unities have proved fragile, incomplete. Certainly the unity of truth is not constituted today in any fashion that would be satisfactory even to ourselves, much less to anyone else. Therefore I say that it is vital that the idea itself should, as it were, go on; that it should be represented; that it should not retire from the field.

This representation takes place in a world of disunity, disruption, conflict. The university will do its greatest service to this kind of world if it performs a ministry of clarification. One aspect of this ministry is suggested in the Jesuit Ratio Studiorum Superiorum:

Let their lectures be such that their students may perceive what is the mentality, and what are the directions of movement and the needs of men in their own age and in their own country. Hence let the professors point out the ways in which these men are seeking the truth and the reasons why they err.

What is here recommended is a work of discernment—that most certain mark of the Catholic intelligence. The refutation of error is the responsibility of one who believes in truth; but the discharge of this responsibility is not ordinarily difficult. More difficult is the task of discerning why men err, and how, amid their errors, they are in search of the truth. This is properly part of our ministry of clarification.

Another part follows immediately. The quality of discernment shows itself in the capacity to ask the right questions clearly, on the basis of defined data that reveal the existence of real problems. This sense

of reality in the grasp of problems is the initial point of appeal to men who frequently enough are caught in dilemmas without quite being able to define just what the horns are.

Finally, the ministry of clarification resolves itself into the ministry of truth. No other ministry is so delicate, so difficult. The truth can be betrayed in many ways—in other more subtle ways than by the utterance of error. The betrayal to which the university is most liable would be the result of sheer distraction. It provides for its students so many different rivulets of truth, in which they may happily splash, that it might distractedly fail to represent the "one river of truth."

This manner of betrayal is far from St. Louis University, I know. But in commemorating the inspiration of a Founder during these days, it seems fitting that we should recall the primary responsibility of the foundation—toward the nevernding task of intellectual order, the always freshly beginning task of constituting the unity of truth.

The major problem put to U.S. foreign policy at the moment is the problem that the Soviet Union has already solved in terms of policy, namely, how to be prepared to use force on all necessary or useful occasions and at the same time to withdraw "survival" from the issues at stake in the use of force.

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# The Confusion of U.S. Foreign Policy

IT MAY be a contribution to the present discussion if I attempt a brief statement of the unique character of the Soviet empire. Co-existence with this empire is the present fact. There are those who seek to transform the fact into a policy by adding various adjectives to the word "co-existence." There is talk, for instance, of "peaceful" co-existence, or "competitive" co-existence. But before co-existence, however adjectivally qualified, can become a policy, it is necessary to know

just what kind of empire we are coexisting with.

It is not enough to cite as the single characteristic of the Soviet empire that it is intent on "world domination," and to let it go at that. The phrase has meaning, but it needs to be analyzed in the light of the four unique aspects of the Soviet empire.

The Soviet Union is historically unique 1) as a state or power, 2) as an empire (*imperium*) or mode of rule, 3) as an imperialism, and

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4) as the legatee of a special segment of world history.

#### A Unique State

1. Russia is unique as a state or a power. For the first time in history it has brought under a single supreme government the 210 million people scattered over the 8.6 million square miles of the Euro-Asiatic plain, the great land-mass that stretches from the River Elbe to the Pacific Ocean. This gigantic power is a police state of new proportions and unique efficiency. Within it there is no such thing as the "rule of law"; there is only the thing called "Soviet legality." Power is used according to certain forms; but there is no justice and no sense. of human rights. The Soviet Union has not adopted the Western concept of law nor has it evolved a comparable concept of its own. Its theory of government is purely and simply despotism.

Moreover, through a novel set of institutions the Soviet Union has succeeded in centralizing all governmental power to a degree never before achieved. The ultimate organ of control is the Communist party, a small group of men who think and act under an all-embracing discipline that has likewise never before been achieved. Under its historically new system-a totally socialized economy-the Soviet Union has become an industrial and technological power whose single rival is the United States; in rising to this status of power it has chosen to emphasize industries and technologies that are related to war.

This state is consequently a military power of the first order. It has no rival in ground forces; its air power is adequate to all the new exigencies of war; and for the first time in history the state that controls the heartland of the world island has become a sea power of a special kind, an underwater power. Finally, its nuclear capabilities, achieved in large measure independently of outside sources of information (as Deputy Secretary of Defense Quarles has recently admitted), are equal to those of the United States, for all practical purposes and many impractical ones.

### A Unique Empire

2. Russia is unique as an empire, as a manner and method of rule, as an imperium. It is organized and guided in accordance with a revolutionary doctrine. For the first time in history this doctrine has consciously erected an atheistic materialism into a political and legal principle that furnishes the substance of the state and determines its procedures. Soviet doctrine is exclusive and universal in its claim to furnish, not only an account of nature and history, but also a technique of historical change. It is therefore inherently aggressive in its intent; and it considers itself destined to sole survival as an organizing force in the world of politics.

The Communist doctrine of the World Revolution has indeed undergone a century of change, since

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the days of Marx and Engels. Substantially, however, the change has been simply development. The basic inspiration has been steady and the continuity has been organic. As Prof. Albert G. Meyer has recently pointed out: "Stalinism can and must be defined as a pattern of thought and action that flows directly from Leninism" (Leninism, p. 282). Prof. Bertram D. Wolfe has documented the same thesis (Khrushchev and Stalin's Ghost). This thesis is in possession. And there is no convincing evidence that Mr. Khrushchev represents apostasy or even heresy.

# A Unique Imperialism

3. Russia is unique as an imperialism. The Soviet Union is essentially an empire, not a country. Nearly half her subjects should be considered "colonial peoples." Many of the "sister republics" are no more part of Russia than India was of Great Britain. As Mr. Edward Crankshaw has reminded us, "Even if Moscow retreated to the frontiers of the Soviet Union tomorrow, Russia would still be the greatest imperial power in the world."

Soviet imperialism has exhibited a new mastery of older imperialistic techniques—military conquest, the enduring threat of force, political puppetry, centralized administration of minorities, economic exploitation of "colonial" regions. It has expanded the old concept of the "ally" into the new concept of the "satellite." But perhaps its newness is

chiefly revealed in the creation of the historically unique imperialistic device known as "Soviet patriotism."

This higher patriotism claims priority over all mere national loyalties. It is a loyalty to the Socialist Revolution. It assures to the Soviet Union a form of imperialistic penetration into other states, namely, the Fifth Column, that no government in history has hitherto commanded. Soviet imperialism, unlike former imperialisms, can be content with the creation of chaos and disorder; within any given segment of time it need not seek to impose a dominion, an order. The Soviet Union may indeed lack a finished imperial design; in any case, the concept of design is too rational for a force that owes little to reason. But it has something better for its purposes, which are inherently dark. It has a revolutionary vision.

If there must be a single phrase to sum up the intentions of Soviet imperialism, it would be far better to speak of "world revolution" than of "world domination." The word "revolution" has a definite meaning that signifies a definite possibility. The world as we know it can be radically changed; it is, in fact, changing daily before our eyes. Moreover, it is possible to know the directions of change that are implicit in the Communist world revolution, as it is guided by Communist doctrine.

# A Unique Legatee

4. The Soviet Union is unique as the legatee of a longer history. It

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is the inheritor both of Tsarist imperialism and of mystical panslavist messianism. It carries on, at the same time that it fundamentally transforms, the myth of Holy Russia, the "spiritual people," the "godbearing children of the East," whose messianic destiny is to rescue humanity from the "Promethean West." Communism, whether in theory or in practice, is not a legacy of Western history, nor is it a "Christian heresy" (the pernicious fallacy popularized by Professor Toynbee).

Essentially, it came out of the East, as a conscious apostasy from the West. It may indeed be said that Jacobinism was its forerunner; but Jacobinism was itself an apostasy from the liberal tradition of the West, as well as from Christianity, by its cardinal tenet (roundly condemned by Pope Leo XIII) that there are no bounds to the juridical omnipotence of government, since the power of the state is not under the law, much less under God. In any case, communism has assumed the task at which Jacobinism failed -that of putting an end to the history of the West. Communism has undertaken to inaugurate a new history, the so-called Third Epoch, that will abolish and supplant what we called the two Western epochs, feudalism and capitalism.

## Consequences for America

My proposition is that each of these four unique aspects of the Soviet Empire has consequences for American policy. No structure of policy will be intelligent or successful that does not reckon with all of them. Indeed, all our past mistakes of policy have resulted from the American disposition to ignore, or to misunderstand, one or the other of these four unique aspects of Russia.

It would be a lengthy task, although not a difficult one, to demonstrate this proposition with a fair measure of certitude. However, I shall make only two major points.

First, if the Soviet Union be regarded simply in the first of its unique aspects, as a state or power, under precision from its other aspects, there need be no serious conflict between it and the United States. The American locus of power lies in another hemisphere. Our geopolitical position is secure; so too is theirs. Conflicts of interests and clashes of power would arise, but they could be composed peacefully.

This point needs making in order to disallow the conception that the American-Soviet confrontation is purely a power-struggle between two colossi of power, whose sheer power is reciprocally a threat, one to the other. To see the problem thus, and to base American policy on anxious conjectures as to which power is "ahead" or "behind" in the accumulation of power, is to mistake the problem completely.

The many-sided conflict known, not inappropriately, as the cold war is unintelligible (and therefore must seem unreal) except in the light of the second unique aspect of the Soviet state. It is an *imperium*, a mode of rule, guided in its internal

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and external policy by a comprehensive systematic doctrine that contradicts at every important point the tradition of the West.

Soviet theory and practice stand in organic independence. Only Soviet doctrine makes Soviet power a threat to the United States. Only Soviet doctrine explains the peculiar nature of Soviet imperialism and shows it to be unappeasable in its dynamism. Only Soviet doctrine illumines the intentions of the new messianism that has come out of the East, fitted with an armature of power, and organized implacably against the West.

Here, of course, in the concept of an empire controlled by a dogma, is the sticking-point for the pragmatic American mind. Two questions arise. First, is this concept of the Soviet Empire true? Second, if it is, can the pragmatic mind take in its truth and be guided accordingly in the fashioning of policy? For my part, the answer to the first question is unhesitatingly yes. I am less sure about the answer to the second question.

The American mind is consciously pragmatist. To it the notion of a great state submitting its purposes and action to the control of a dogmatic philosophy seems absurd. The pragmatist mind instinctively refuses to take in this notion or to study its implications. What matters for the statesman, however, is not that the dogma is nonsense but that the Soviet leaders act on the dogma, nonsense though it be.

## Post-War Soviet Policy

In 1945, despite her war losses, Russia was on the crest of the wave. She had territorial defense in sufficient depth on all fronts. Fellowtraveling governments controlled the new states, including the crucial salient, Czechoslovakia. In the United States, Britain, and France a mood of general, if not unbroken, goodwill towards Russia prevailed to a degree that was almost pathological. Germany, the old enemy of Czarist regimes, was in ruins, impotent, under a military government imposed by the Allies. The Western nations were disarming at breakneck speed. If Russia's own security were the goal, it had been achieved. If the goal were the fulfillment of an old-fashioned Czarist imperial design, looking to the consolidation of power, it too was substantially complete. Or, if the goal was simply the extension of the new imperialism through international enlistments under the device of the "higher patriotism," looking to what Crankshaw calls the "inconsequent mischief-making of the Comintern," the way to it lay open, and eager wishful thinkers in all lands were busily engaged in enlarging the possibilities of mischief, under hardly any opposition or even serious suspicion.

In any case, one would have expected subtle tactics of restraint. Instead the "tough line" suddenly appeared—ruthless pressure for direct control of the satellites, inter-

vention in Greece (and Iran), obstructive opposition to the Marshall Plan and the Austrian Treaty, the Berlin blockade, and the creation of the Cominform. In consequence, within three years the Kremlin had dissipated its major asset of international goodwill. It created for itself a peril that had not previously existed. A divided and disarmed West had begun to unite and arm itself against the menace now visible, though not yet understood.

Why did all this happen? The only satisfactory answer is that the Kremlin was guided by Communist doctrine. The capitalist powers were well disposed? They could not be; the doctrine holds that the capitalist "camp" is irreconcilably hostile. Constitutional socialist governments would protect the socialist homeland against capitalist aggression? No: the doctrine holds that Social Democracy is inherently untrustworthy and ought to be destroyed, because it only deceives the worker and confuses the issue by its pretension to be a Third Force. World peace is the common goal, through negotiations within the framework of the United Nations? Nonsense: the doctrine holds that the conflict between the two homeland "camps" and the two colonial "fronts" is unappeasable. It is the necessary means to the World Revolution. It will be resolved only by the World Revolution. And in its resolution the methods of force cannot be dispensed with. Finally, the doctrine held that at the end of the war the capitalist "camp" simply had to be in a state of "weakness"; its "internal contradictions" were actively at work, presaging its downfall. By the doctrine, therefore, it was the moment for the strategy of the Revolution, the strategy of forceful aggression.

# Unchangeable Soviet Dogma

Moreover, it will not do to say that this dictation of policy and events by doctrine will not happen again; that Stalin is dead; that Russia is "different"; that new men are in charge; that they are realists and opportunists, men rather like ourselves who take the pragmatic view. The Russia of Khrushchev is indeed somewhat different from the Russia of Stalin, but only within the limits of the doctrine. The basic Soviet structure is an indivisible and interlocking whole. It cannot permit itself to be tampered with at any point, save on peril of destruction. Still less can it contemplate changes in the dogmas that sustain the edifice of imperialistic power.

The official atheism is necessary in order that the individual may claim no moral rights against the state and no freedom except within the "collective" freedom of the state. This exploitation of the individual in the service of the state is necessary as the premise of forcing further the gigantic technological development.

The cult of Soviet patriotism is necessary to preserve the solidarity of the colonial empire over the more than thirty-five national minorities within the Soviet Union, and over the ring of satellite states, as well as to retain that indispensable adjunct of Soviet imperialism, the

motley Fifth Column.

The maintenance of the police state makes it necessary there should be "danger from without," from irreconcilable, hostile, aggressive capitalist imperialism. This danger is also necessary to explain to the puzzled inquirer why the state is not withering away. The rejection of the possibility of entirely peaceful evolution to world socialism and the belief in force as the indispensable agent of the Revolution are necessary to sustain the burden of militarization and armament. And the whole edifice rests squarely in the basic Marxist dogma-the conflict of two opposed worlds leading dialectically and deterministically to the World Revolution.

Finally, the personal security of the Soviet rulers and the continuing privileges of the "new class" are dependent on the maintenance both of the empire and of the revolutionary doctrine that sustains it. Thus self-interest buttresses belief in the

doctrine.

## Premise of American Policy

This fourfold view of the unique reality of the Soviet Empire is the only solid first premise of American foreign policy in foreign affairs and military defense. It is a more intelligent premise than the concept of "world domination" in any of the current understandings or misunderstandings of that phrase. It is also a more comprehensive premise than

any analysis of the relatively superficial "facts of power."

The major value of a full view of the unique character of the Soviet Union is that it creates a limited but useful set of expectations on which to base American policy.

A true view of the Soviet Union, as a unique imperialism, would suggest that we cease to confuse foreign policy with diplomatic negotiations. To paraphrase a famous remark, foreign policy is when you know what you want. It supposes that you know the possibility of getting what you want, before you decide that you want it. Negotiation is simply the means of getting what you want.

It is time we learned, therefore, not to fix our policy by negotiations but to conduct negotiations in order to fulfill our policies. It is time, too, that we laid aside completely the concept of "sincerity" as a political category, even though it is so dear to a type of Eastern-seaboard liberal mind that believes in nothing else. To inquire into Soviet "sincerity" or to require "sincerity" of the Soviet Union is a complete waste of time.

The chiefly important expectability of "sincerity" is that the Soviet Union will always act on its own doctrine. It will continually probe for every vacuum of power and for every soft spot of purpose.

This is why "disengagement" as an American policy could not be other than disastrous. It would surely heighten the danger of war, most probably by permitting the creation of situations that we could not pos-

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sibly accept. Only the very opposite policy is safe—a policy of continuous engagement at every point, on all levels of action, by both tactical and strategic moves. At times this policy of continuous engagement might well be enforced simply by variants of the highly effective argumentative technique of the blank and silent stare. The Russians employed it well in the tent at Panmunjom. Turkey has always used it successfully; and West Berlin has learned its value. We still talk too much.

A policy of continuous engagement with the World Revolution does not mean solely a policy of hostility, contradiction, and opposition. Nor is it to be translated primarily into military terms. The engagment can be cooperative, positive, constructive in a number of ways.

## The Domestic Fiasco

This may be the place to comment on the basic fiasco of our engagement with communism on the domestic scene. The subject is a bit complicated. It is, of course, not necessary to invoke Communist influence to explain the various stupidities of American wartime and postwar policies. Stupidity itself is sufficient explanation. The pattern of it was set by the American President who was "certain," he said in all good faith, "that Stalin is not an imperialist." The anti-Communist movement, centering on the issue of internal subversion, probably compounded the confusion by transforming issues of stupidity into issues of "disloyalty."

The muzzy sentimentalism of the 1945 climate has indeed been altered. Everybody now mortally hates and fears what is known, rather vaguely, as "the Communist menace." By a strange irony, however, those who were the loudest in bringing the menace home were or are the last ones on American earth whom one would want to see in charge of combating the menace abroad, in the field of foreign policy, where the massive menace lies. By a contrasting irony, many of those who took the sound view in matters of foreign policy were fuzzy on the issue of internal subversion.

In any case, whatever its effect on public emotion, the anti-Communist movement has been fairly spectacular in its failure to contribute to public understanding. The problem of understanding centers on three large issues: What is this "thing from the East," what is the Western "thing" in the name of which we oppose it, and what were the corrosive forces that were able to create a yawning spiritual and intellectual vacuum within the West, but were not able to fill it, with the result that the "thing from the East" found some lodgment there? Thousands of questions and answers before Congressional committees and bushels of propaganda sheets from patriotic societies have contributed almost nothing to an answer to these questions.

In their turn, the forces that opposed the anti-Communist movement have rivaled it in their failure to contribute to public understanding. In considerable part they failed even to speak to the real issues, being content to retire, embattled, behind a rather porous barricade—a concept of democracy as an ensemble of procedures, a legal system of civil rights.

Even yet the response to Communist imperialism is largely in emotional terms—fear and hatred (or, conversely, pathetic appeals to "understand the Russians") and bursts of brief excitement over every new Communist success, and, for the rest, a last-minute rush to the resources of pragmatism in all its forms (notably including military technology) to meet particular issues as they arise.

## Armaments and War

This brings up the question that looms so large—the question of armaments and war. The underlying issue is whether a full view of the unique reality of the Soviet empire furnishes any reliable expectations in this critical area. There are several.

Soviet doctrine as a whole dictates a policy of maximum security and minimum risk. Risks can and must be minimum because the dialectic of history decrees that the capitalist world, though still powerful, is decaying and must inevitably disintegrate from within, whereas the forces of socialism are in constant ascendancy and must inevitably triumph. Security must be maximal because at every point the gains

made by political or military means must be consolidated as the base for further revolutionary advance. The Soviet Union cannot be provoked into taking risks that exceed the minimum; for it does not act under external provocation but under an internal dynamism. These conclusions, already implicit in the doctrine, are confirmed by all the evidence in the historical record.

Our policy should envisage a minimum of security and a maximum of risk. Only by such a policy can we seize and retain the initiative in world affairs. And it is highly dangerous not to have the initiative. On the premise of this balance we did, in fact, enter the Korean war, which was right. But then we retreated from the premise to a policy of minimal risk, which was a mistake.

Moreover, it would be prudent even to create situations of risk for the Soviet Union-situations in which the risk would be too great for it to take. We may be sure that the Soviet leadership will not risk the debacle of the World Revolution through a major war for the sake of anything less than the soil of the homeland of the Revolution. We may expect that it will vield tactical ground, or refrain from going after tactical ground, if the risk of holding it or going after it becomes serious. But if there is no risk, or only a minimal risk, aggressive policies will be carried through, as they were in Hungary, where nothing was done to create a risk.

At the same time, Soviet doctrine

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serves to warn us to be wary of the facile persuasion now being spread about that "Russia doesn't want war." The use of force, as an instrument of national policy, is still an essential tenet in the Communist creed. By the whole force of Communist "insight into historical necessity" Russia still wants war-the kind of war, in the time and place, that would be necessary or useful to further the multiple ends of the World Revolution, not least perhaps by extending the colonial "liberation front." It is all a matter of the measure of risk that war would entail and of the measure of its usefulness for the World Revolution.

Precisely here, however, the present Communist insight into historical necessity—in the case, the necessity of the use of force to further the Revolution—must be less naive than once it was. One cannot doubt that the Leninist-Stalinist doctrine has been subjected to revision in Communist high councils in the light of the realities of nuclear war. What usefulness would attach to this manner of "frightful collision"? What risks of it should be run?

The results of this revision of doctrine may have been hinted at by Khrushchev at the 20th Party Congress in 1956. He did not refer to the new instrument of frightfulness, the H-bomb. His utterance was cautious. The Communist will not renounce his essential weapon, the threat of force. Nor will he renounce force itself. But he will carefully calculate its uses and its usefulness for his own purposes and

on his own premise of policy—maximum security and minimal risk. This manner of calculation is his specialty. Moreover, he will make the conclusions of this calculation serve as the premise of his armament policies.

# The Important Question

What conclusions has the Communist come to, what policies has he consequently defined for himself in this historical moment so different from Lenin's—in this our nuclear age? The answer to this question would presumably be an important premise of American policies with regard to war and the weapons of war. The answer should be obvious.

1. All-out nuclear war is not a means of furthering the World Revolution; its only outcome would be the end of the Revolution, in the end of the world; the risk of it therefore must be avoided in the conduct of political affairs.

2. An all-out surprise attack on the capitalist world, with nuclear weapons, would run a maximum risk of the retaliatory destruction of the homeland and of the Revolution itself; it is therefore excluded as a strategy of conquest.

3. On the other hand, the capitalist world is intrinsically imperialistic, aggressive, and bent on military conquest, as its hostile "encirclement" of the Soviet Union shows. It is ready for all-out nuclear war; and, despite its professions, it might launch a surprise attack. Therefore the Soviet Union must be ready for both contingencies. Maximum secur-

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ity requires maximum armament, conventional and nuclear.

4. Military force is still a factor in political affairs, through its use, and especially through the sheer threat of its use. The doctrine of the Revolution-the doctrine of "collisions"-still holds. It will come into play whenever the risks are sufficiently minimal, and the chances of success sufficiently solid. These conditions will be more readily verified when the use of force, including nuclear force, is on a small scale for settling (or aggravating) local disturbances. Therefore small-scale nuclear force must be available in quantity, together with conventional arms. But if the risk appears that the tactical action will be enlarged to the dimensions of strategic action, through the employment of strategic nuclear weapons, it must be broken off, lest the homeland or the Revolution itself be endangered.

In sum: Major nuclear "collisions" with the capitalist world are not inevitable; on the contrary, they must be avoided, since they cannot advance the Communist cause. World socialism can and must be achieved without major war, by peaceful means-political, diplomatic, economic, propagandistic (this, in effect, is what Khrushchev said in 1956). Adventurism is to be rejected, since it violates the policy of minimal risk. On the other hand, the threat of force is still a valid revolutionary weapon; so too is the use of force itself in determined circumstances. Finally, the homeland is in "danger from without." Therefore the armament program must be pushed through the whole spectrum of nuclear weapons-large weapons as a deterrent for maximum security; small weapons for use with a minimum risk.

## Conclusions

If this diagnosis of Communist thinking is generally correct, it suggests several conclusions with regard to American thought.

1. The danger of an all-out sneak nuclear attack on the United States has been vastly exaggerated. We have maximal security against it in the Soviet policy of minimal risk as long as the massive deterrent is sustained.

2. The correlative danger of an all-out nuclear war has likewise been vastly exaggerated. It could only happen as the result of enormous stupidity, basically attributable to a complete miscalculation of Soviet intentions, itself based on a misunderstanding of Soviet doctrine. This stupidity is no more inevitable than war itself.

3. The danger of limited wars has been underestimated. It seems to be the historical American delusion that no war is worth while unless it is unlimited, waged for "ultimate" causes. There is also the special delusion proper to the nuclear age, that any use of nuclear weapons, however low in the kiloton range, must inevitably lead to world catastrophe. Hence the false dilemma: either to begin with catastrophe or to renounce all use of nuclear force.

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4. More generally, the whole concept of the cold war, so called, has been overmilitarized and therefore superficialized. This overmilitarization, combined with the exaggerations noted above, has affected national policy adversely in many respects. Moreover, it has tended to obscure or even discredit the validity of the very concept of the cold war. This too is lamentable, because the concept is fully valid, if it is interpreted in the light of the full reality of the Soviet empire in its fourfold uniqueness. Unfortunately, it has become too easy to say that, since the Communist threat is not primarily military (which is true), it is no threat at all and we should make disengagement our policy (which is completely false). Unfortunately too, it has become too easy to say that, since the United States is sufficiently safe from foreign military aggression (which is true), the real threat is internal Communist subversion (which is false).

Finally: All the confusions in American thinking come to a focus in the opinion that the issue of American "survival" is squarely put to the Department of Defense, supported by the Atomic Energy Commission. This opinion is entirely disastrous. We may be quite sure that the Communist mind, with its realistic and strategic habits of thought, has carefully separated the problem of the "survival" of the Communist Revolution from the problem of war. The Communist leadership has no slightest intention

of making "survival" the issue to be settled by force of arms. In fact, it is prepared to abandon resort to arms, as soon as the issue of "survival" is raised. Survival is the one thing it is not willing to risk.

# Our Major Problem

The problem put to American policy at the moment, therefore, is the problem that the Soviet Union has already solved in terms of policy, namely, how to be prepared to use force on all necessary or useful occasions, and at the same time to withdraw "survival" from the issues at stake in the use of force.

The American nuclear armament program seems to have been conceived to insure "survival" but not to fight a legitimate war for limited and justifiable ends. We have got the problem of "survival" and the problem of war so mixed up that we may finally be incapable of solving either.

The Soviet Union as a powerimperialism indeed must be confronted by power, steadily and at every point. But when the question is military enagagement it is quite false to say that the issue is "survival." And American persistence in thinking this could easily reduce American power to impotence. The real issue is to know how and why "survival" got to be thought of as the military issue, and then to withdraw it from the limited political and moral issues at stake in our military engagement with the Soviet Union. It is impossible to think of any other way in which our nu-

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oviink nuclear armament program can be reduced to rationality—to some sensible conformity to the canons of moral reason (which look to justice in war), and to a hardly less desirable conformity to the rules of military reason (which look to success in war).

#### The Uneasiness Abroad

The general uneasiness among the public-here at home and abroad -derives from an instinctive sense that America does not know what it is trying to do. And the uneasiness is sharpened by the general knowledge of what we are in fact doing, and have in fact been doing since the Manhattan Project. We are engaged in the exploitation of technological possibilities simply because they are possibilities, in the absence of any clearly defined strategic purposes that would be consonant with the institution of war as a valid instrument for altering the political will of an enemy-in the case, the Communist enemy, whose political will, and whose doctrine on the limited use of force in support of his will, are by no means mysterious or unknowable. The general public senses that this situation is irrational and therefore immoral. And it focuses its deeper fear and its more diffused disapproval on the relatively minor question of nuclear tests.

It is bad enough when policy and armaments run in opposite directions; as Theodore Roosevelt said,

we cannot be a nation "opulent, aggressive, and unarmed." But it is worse when policy runs after armaments, and armaments run after technology, with the pressures of budgetary considerations buttressing the primacy of the technology of multimegaton weapons, because they are cheaper. An armaments race that may end in war is bad enough, since there is always an element of irrationality in war, even when it is a just war. But an armaments race that seems already to have ended in absurdity is vastly worse, because what is militarily absurd is irredeemably immoral.

It may well be that the pragmatist American mind will not hearken to discourse on the morality of war, especially since it bears beneath its pragmatism the American-Protestant taint of pacifism. However, it might listen to discourse on success in war-concretely, on the kind of success that is politically valuable in the kind of war that is possible or likely, in present circumstances, against a particular enemy, who has a fully constructed "compass" (as Stalin called it) whereby to set his intentions and to direct his action in history, and who, finally, has an articulated doctrine with regard to the limited uses of military force in support of his political will. The moralist, of course, will not object to such discourse on success in war. It forms, in fact, the opening paragraphs of his own moral discourse.

In the light of traditional Catholic doctrine and in the light of the facts of international life and technological development today, how can we arrive at an integral and morally defensible position on the problem of war?

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# God, Man and Nuclear War

THERE are three distinct standpoints from which it is possible
to launch a discussion of the problem of war in this strange and perilous age of ours that has yet to find
its name. My initial assertion will
be that it is a mistake to adopt any
one of them exclusively and to carry
the argument on to its logical conclusions. If this is done, the argument will end in serious difficulties.

First, one might begin by considering the possibilities of destruction and ruin, both physical and human, that are afforded by existent and projected developments in weapons technology. Here the essential fact is that there are no in-

herent limits to the measure of chaos that war might entail, whether by the use of nuclear arms or possibly by the methods of bacteriological and chemical warfare. Carried to its logical conclusion an argument made exclusively from this standpoint leads towards the position that war has now become a moral absurdity, not to be justified in any circumstances today.

In its most respectable form this position may be called relative Christian pacifism. It does not assert that war is intrinsically evil simply because it is a use of force and violence and therefore a contravention of the Christian law of love

<sup>\*</sup>Reprinted from Theological Studies, Woodstock College, Woodstock, Md., March 1959.

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promulgated in the Sermon on the Mount. This is absolute pacifism, an unqualified embrace of the principle of nonviolence; it is more characteristic of certain Protestant sects. The relative pacifists are content to affirm that war has now become an evil that may no longer be justified, given the fact that no adequate justification can be offered for the ruinous effects of today's weapons of war. Even this position, I shall say, is not to be squared with the public doctrine of the Church.

Second, one might begin the argument by considering the present historical situation of humanity as dominated by the fact of communism. The essential fact here is that communism, as an ideology and as a power-system, constitutes the gravest possible menace to the moral and civilizational values that form the basis of "the West," understanding the term to designate, not a geographical entity, but an order of temporal life that has been the product of valid human dynamisms tempered by the spirit of the gospel.

Arguing from this standpoint alone one could well posit, in all logic, the present validity of the concept of the "holy war." Or one might come to some advocacy of "preventive" war or "pre-emptive" war. Or one might be led to assert that, since the adversary is completely unprincipled, and since our duty in face of him is success in the service of civilization itself, we must jettison the tradition of civilized warfare and be prepared to use any means that promise success. None

of these conclusions is morally acceptable.

Third, one might choose as a starting point the fact that today there exists a mode of international organization that is committed by its charter to the preservation of peace by pacific settlement of international disputes. One might then argue that the validity of war even as a legal institution has now vanished, with the passing of the hypothesis under which its legal validity was once defended, namely, the absence of a juridically organized international community.

But this conclusion seems, at very best, too rapid, for several reasons. The United Nations is not, properly speaking, a juridical organization with adequate legal authority to govern in the international community. It is basically a power-organization. And its decisions, like those rendered by war itself, are natively apt to sanction injustice as well as justice. It is not at all clear that the existence of the United Nations, as presently constituted, definitely destroys the hypothesis on which the validity of war as a legal institution has traditionally been predicated. It is not at all clear that the United Nations in its present stage of development will be able to cope justly and effectively with the underlying causes of international conflict today or with the particular cases of conflict that may arise.

If therefore one adopts a single standpoint of argument, and adheres to it narrowly and exclusively, one will not find one's way to an

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integral and morally defensible position on the problem of war. On the other hand, all of the three standpoints mentioned do derive from real aspects of the problem itself. In consequence, each of them must be exploited, if the problem is to be understood in its full scope. This is my second assertion. It is not possible here to develop it in detail. I shall merely suggest that there are three basic questions that must be explored at length and in detail. Moreover, there is an order among these questions.

## Nature of the Conflict

The first question concerns the exact nature of the conflict that is the very definition of international life today. This is the first question because it sets the perspectives in which all other questions must be considered.<sup>1</sup>

I would note here that Pius XII fairly steadily considered the problem of war and of the weapons of war, as well as the problem of international organization, within the perspectives of what he called "the line of rupture which divides the entire international community into opposed blocs," with the result that "co-existence in truth" is not possible, since there is no common acceptance of a "norm recognized by all as morally obligatory and therefore inviolable."

I would further note that the exact nature of the international conflict is not easily and simply defined. The line of rupture is not in the first instance geographic but spiritual and moral; and it runs through the West as well as between East and West. It cannot be a question of locating on "our" side of the rupture those who are virtuous and intelligent, and, over against "us," those who are evil and morally blind. In contrast, it cannot be a question of maintaining that both East and West are so full of moral ambiguities that the line of rupture between them either does not exist or is impossible to discern. In a word, one must avoid both a moral simplism and a moral scepticism in the analysis of the international conflict.

Finally, it is most important to distinguish between the mainsprings of the conflict and its concrete manifestations; or, with Sir David Kelly (The Hungry Sheep [London, 1955]), between the relatively superficial facts of change in our revolutionary world and the underlying currents of change. Moreover, it is important to relate the two levels of analysis, in so far as this can be done without artificiality.

The tendency of this whole line of analysis, bearing on the nature of the international conflict, will be to furnish an answer to a complex

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For a fuller analysis of this conflict see "The Confusion of U.S. Foreign Policy" (pp. 261-73). Ed. Note.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Christmas Message, 1950; CATHOLIC MIND 49 (1951) 207.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Christmas Message, 1954; CATHOLIC MIND 53 (1955) 187.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Allocution to the Ambassador of Ecuador, July 13, 1948.

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of questions that must be answered before it is possible to consider the more narrow problem of war. What precisely are the values, in what hierarchical scale, that today are at stake in the international conflict? What is the degree of danger in which they stand? What is the mode of the menace itself-in particular, to what extent is it military, and to what extent is it posed by forms of force that are more subtle? If these questions are not carefully answered, one will have no standard against which to match the evils of war. And terror, rather than reason, will command one's judgments on the military problem. This is the danger to which the seven moral theologians in Germany pointed in their statement of May 5, 1958 (Herder-Korrespondenz 12, no. 9 [June, 19581 396):

A part of the confusion among our people has its source in the fact that there is an insufficient realization of the reach of values that are endangered today, and of the hierarchical order among them, and of the degree of danger in which they stand. On the other hand, from the *Unheimlichkeit* of the technical problems [of war itself] there results a crippling of intelligence and of will.

## Means Available

The second basic question concerns the means that are available for insuring the defense of the values that are at stake in the international conflict. This too is a large and complex question. A whole array of means is available, in correspondence with the multi-faceted character of the conflict itself. It is a matter of understanding both the usefulness and the limitations of each of them, from spectacular "summit meetings" across the gamut to the wholly unspectacular work, say, of agricultural experts engaged in increasing the food supply of so-called underdeveloped nations. This whole complex question of the means of conflict must be fully explored antecedently to the consideration of the problem of war. The basic reason is that otherwise one can give no concrete meaning to the concept of war as ultima ratio. Moreover, the value of the use of force, even as ultima ratio, will be either overestimated or underestimated, in proportion as too much or too little value is attached to other means of sustaining and pressing the international conflict.

## Arms as the Last Resort

The third and final question concerns the *ultima ratio* itself, the arbitrament of arms as the last resort.

Here we confront the third novelty in the total problem. The present historical situation of international conflict is unique. "Never," said Pius XII in his 1950 Christmas Message, "has human history known a more gigantic disorder." The uniqueness of the disorder resides, I take it, in the unparalleled depth of its vertical dimension; it goes to the very roots of order and disorder in the world—the nature of man, his destiny, and the meaning of human

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history. There is a uniqueness too in the second basic question posited above, scil., the unprecedented scope of the conflict in its horizontal dimension, given the variety of means whereby it may be, and is being, waged. A special uniqueness resides too in the existence of the United Nations, as an arena of conflict indeed, but also as an instrument of peacemaking to some degree. However, the most immediately striking uniqueness comes to view when one considers the weapons for warmaking that are now in hand or within grasp.

There are two subordinate questions under this general heading of the nature of war today. The first concerns the actual state of progress (if it be progress and not a regress to barbarism) in the technology of defensive and offensive weapons of war. The second concerns the military usefulness, for any intelligible military and political purposes, of the variety of weapons developed. This latter question raises the issue of the strategic and tactical concepts that are to govern the use of these various weapons. The facts that would furnish answers to these questions are to a considerable extent hidden from the public knowledge; and, to the extent to which they are known, they have been generative of confusion in the public mind. In any case, these questions must have some reasonably satisfactory answer, if the moral problem of war is to be sensibly discussed.

# Toward a Moral Theory

An initial, not necessarily complete, exploration of these three lines is sufficient to suggest the outlines of a general moral theory. Whether Catholic thought can be content to stop with a moral theory cast simply in the mode of abstractness that characterizes the following propositions will be a further question. In any case, it is necessary in the first instance to state the general propositions. In stating them I am undertaking to render the substance of the thought of Pius XII; but there will be only a minimum of citation, and even of explanation.

1. All wars of aggression, whether just or unjust, fall under the ban of moral proscription.

I use the term "war of aggression" because Pius XII used it. However, he gives no real definition of the term. It seems to stand simply as the contrary of a war of selfdefense (whose definition, as we shall see, is more concrete and historical). Expressly, the Pope denies in his Christmas Message of 1944 that recourse to force is "a legitimate solution for international controversies and a means for the realization of national aspirations." He seems therefore to be denying to individual states, in this historical moment, the ius belli (compétence de guerre) of the modern era of the unlimited sovereign state, scil., the right of recourse to war, on the sovereign judgment of the national state, for the vindication of legal rights and legitimate interests. The e

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legal The use of force is not now a moral means for the redress of violated legal rights. The justness of the cause is irrelevant; there simply is no longer a right of self-redress; no individual state may presume to take even the cause of justice into its own hands. Whatever the grievance of the state may be, and however objectionable it may find the status quo, warfare undertaken on the sovereign decision of the national state is an immoral means for settling the grievance and for altering existent conditions.

If this be the correct interpretation of Pius XII's thought, it will be seen that an important modification of the modern Scholastic doctrine of war has been made. The reasons for making it derive from two of the above-mentioned lines of inquiry. First, the immeasurably increased violence of war today disqualifies it as an apt and proportionate means for the resolution of international conflicts and even for the redress of just grievances. Second, to continue to admit the right of war, as an attribute of national sovereignty, would seriously block the progress of the international community to that mode of juridical organization which Pius XII regarded as the single means for the outlawry of all war.

Pius XII clearly stigmatized "aggressive" war as "a sin, an offense, and an outrage against the majesty of God." Should this sin in the moral order also be transposed into a crime in the legal order? Pius expressly said that "modern total war, and ABC warfare in particular," when it is not stringently in selfdefense, "constitutes a crime worthy of the most severe national and international sanctions." I should think the same recommendation would apply to less violent forms of "aggressive" warfare. However, Pius XII did not enter the formidable technical problem, how this legal transcription of a moral principle is to be effected. The problem has hitherto been insoluble.

A defensive war to repress injustice is morally admissible both in principle and in fact.

In its abstractness this principle has always formed part of Catholic doctrine; by its assertion the Church finds a way between the false extremes of pacifism and bellicism. Moreover, the assertion itself, far from being a contradiction of the basic Christian will to peace, is the strongest possible affirmation of this will. There is no peace without justice, law, and order. But "law and order have need at times of the powerful arm of force." And, as Pius XII noted in his 1948 Christmas Message, the precept of peace itself requires that peace be defended against violation:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Christmas Message, 1948; CATHOLIC MIND 47 (1949) 184.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Allocution to the World Medical Congress, Sept. 30, 1954; CATHOLISC MIND 53 (1955)

Allocution to the visiting members of the U.S. House of Representatives' Armed Services Committee, Oct. 8, 1947.

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The precept of peace is of divine right. Its purpose is to protect the goods of humanity, inasmuch as they are the goods of the Creator. Among these goods there are some of such importance for the human community that their defense against an unjust aggression is without doubt fully justified.

There is nothing new about these assertions. What is important is their reiteration by Pius XII in today's highly concrete historical context of international conflict. The reiteration of the right of defensive war derives directly from an understanding of the conflict and from a realization that nonviolent means of solution may fail. The Church is obliged to confront the dreadful alternative: "the absolute necessity of self-defense against a very grave injustice that touches the community, that cannot be impeded by other means, that nevertheless must be impeded on pain of giving free field in international relations to brutal violence and lack of conscience." The focus becomes even sharper after the events in Hungary, and in the light of the Soviet threat to use atomic weapons in Europe if the French and English adventure in Suez were not terminated. These words from the Christmas Message, 1956, need to be quoted:

The actual situation, which has no equivalent in the past, ought nevertheless to be clear to everyone. There is no further room for doubt about the purposes and the methods that lie be-

hind tanks when they crash resoundingly across frontiers to distribute death and to force civilized peoples to a form of life that they distinctly abhor. When all the possible stages of negotiation and mediation are bypassed, and when the threat is made to use atomic arms to obtain concrete demands, whether these are justified or not, it becomes clear that, in present circumstances. there may come into existence in a nation a situation in which all hope of averting war becomes vain. In this situation a war of efficacious self-defense against unjust attacks, which is undertaken with hope of success, cannot be considered illicit.9

One can almost feel the personal agony behind the labored sentences (more tortured in the original than in the translation). The agony, and utterance itself, are born of the Pope's reluctant realization that, as he had said earlier that same year, there are rulers "who except themselves from the elementary laws of human society." The tragedy in the situation is accented by his further vision that the people over whom these rulers stand "cannot but be the first to feel the need once more to form part of the human family."

There is no indication that this reaffirmation of the traditional principle of defensive warfare, to which Pius XII was driven by the brutal facts of international life, extends only to wars conducted by so-called conventional arms. On the contrary, the Pope extended it explicitly, not

<sup>8</sup> Allocution to military doctors, Oct. 19, 1953; CATHOLIC MIND 52 (1954) 49.

Christmas Message, 1956; Catholic Mind 55 (1957) 178.
 Radio Broadcast, Nov. 10, 1956; Catholic Mind 55 (1957) 90.

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only to atomic warfare but even to ABC warfare. One cannot therefore uphold the simple statement that atomic war as such, without further qualifications, is morally unjustifiable, or that all use of atomic weapons in war is, somehow in principle, evil.

There are, however, conditions. The basic condition has been stated in the allocution to the World Medical Congress of Pius XII: "One cannot, even in principle, raise the question of the liceity of ABC warfare except in the case in which it must be judged indispensable for self-defense in the conditions indicated."

Briefly, the war must be "imposed by an obvious and extremely grave injustice." No minor infraction of rights will suffice, much less any question of national prestige. The criterion is high, namely, that the nation should "in all truth have been unjustly attacked and menaced in its vital rights."

The second condition is the familiar principle of war as always the ultima ratio. Moreover, it is today the extremity of means in a unique sense, given, on the one hand, the new means of negotiation and arbitration presently available, and on the other, the depths of manifold agony into which recourse to the ultima ratio may now plunge humanity as a whole.

# The Question of Proportion

The third condition is also famil-

iar, the principle of proportion. It invokes a twofold consideration.

First, consideration must be given to the proportion between the damage suffered in consequence of the perpetration of a grave injustice, and the damages that would be let loose by a war to repress the injustice. Pius XII laid some stress on the fact that the comparison here must be between realities of the moral order, and not sheerly between two sets of material damage and loss. The standard is not a "eudaemonism and utilitarianism of materialist origin," as he stated in his 1948 Christmas Message, which would avoid war merely because it is uncomfortable, or connive at injustice simply because its repression would be costly. The question of proportion must be evaluated in more tough-minded fashion, from the viewpoint of the hierarchy of strictly moral values. It is not enough simply to consider the "sorrows and evils that flow from war." There are greater evils than the physical death and destruction wrought in war. And there are human goods of so high an order that immense sacrifices may have to be borne in their defense. By these insistences Pius XII transcended the vulgar pacifism of sentimentalist and materialist inspiration that is so common today.

Second, Pius XII requires an estimate of another proportion, between the evils unleashed by war and what he calls "the solid probability

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Allocution to the World Congress of Women's Organizations, Apr. 24, 1952.

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of success" in the violent repression of unjust action. The specific attention he gives to this condition was immediately prompted by his awareness of the restiveness of the peoples who are presently captive under unjust rule and who are tempted to believe, not without reason, that their rescue will require the use of force. This condition of probable success is not, of course, simply the statesman's classical political calculus of success. It is the moral calculus that is enjoined in the traditional theory of rebellion against tyranny. Furthermore, Pius XII was careful to warn that in applying this moral calculus regard must be had for the tinderbox character of our world in which a spark may set off a conflagration.

A fourth principle of traditional theory is also affirmed by Pius XII, the principle of limitation in the use of force. It may be a matter of some surprise that he gave so little emphasis and development to it, at least in comparison to the preponderant place that the problem seems to have assumed in the minds of other theorists, Catholic and non-Catholic. There is one formal text. After asserting to the World Medical Congress the legitimacy of "modern total warfare," that is, ABC warfare, under the set of stringent conditions already stated, he added:

Even then every effort must be made and every means taken to avoid it, with the aid of international covenants, or to set limits to its use precise enough so that its effects will be confined to

the strict exigencies of defense. In any case, when the employment of this means entails such an extension of the evil that it entirely escapes from the control of man, its use ought to be rejected as immoral. Here it is no longer a question of defense against injustice and of the necessary safeguard of legitimate possessions, but of the annihilation, pure and simple, of all human life within its radius of action. This is not permitted on any account.

One finds in the earlier utterances of the Pope, when he was demonstrating the first thesis in the traditional doctrine of war (that war is an evil, the fruit of sin), much advertence to "massacres of innocent victims," the killing of "infants with their mothers, the ill and infirm and aged," etc. These tragedies stand high on the list of the evils of war. In the text cited there is no explicit return to this principle of the rights of innocence when it is formally a question of total nuclear war and the use of nuclear weapons. If there is an anomaly here, the reason for it may lie in the fact that the Pope was forcing himself to face the desperate case. And in desperate cases, in which conscience is perplexed, the wise moralist is chary of the explicit and the nice, especially when the issue, as here, is one of social and not individual morality. In such case hardly more than a Grenzmoral is to be looked for or counseled. In fact, the whole Catholic doctrine of war is hardly more than a Grenzmoral, an effort to establish on a minimal basis of reason a form of human action, the making of war, 1e

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of ar, that remains always fundamentally irrational.

# Legitimacy of Defense

Two further propositions in the general theory must be mentioned. The first concerns the legitimacy of defense preparations on the part of individual states. Their legitimacy is founded on two actual facts of international life. First, at the moment there does not exist what Pius XII constantly looked forward to as the solution of the problem of war, namely, a constituted international authority possessing a monopoly of the use of armed force in international affairs. Second, there does exist the threat of "brutal violence and lack of conscience." In this factual situation, "the right to be in a posture of defense cannot be denied, even today, to any state."12 Here again the principle is extremely general; it says nothing about the morality of this or that configuration of the defense establishment of a given nation. The statement does not morally validate everything that goes on at Cape Canaveral or at Los Alamos.

Finally, the Pope of Peace disallowed the validity of conscientious objection. The occasion was the controversy on the subject, notably in Germany, where the resonances of a sort of anticipatory Fronterlebnis were giving an alarming impulse to pacifist movements. Particularly in question was the deposit of nu-

clear weapons on German soil as part of the NATO defense establishment. The Pope's judgment was premised on the legitimacy of the government, the democratic openness of its decisions, and the extremity of the historical necessity for making such defense preparations as would be adequate in the circumstances. He concluded in his 1956 Christmas Message that such a government is "acting in a manner that is not immoral" and that "a Catholic citizen may not make appeal to his own conscience as ground for refusing to give his services and to fulfil duties fixed by law." This duty of armed service to the state, and this right of the state to arm itself for self-defense, are, he added, the traditional doctrine of the Church, even in latter days under Leo XIII and Benedict XV, when the problem of armaments and conscription put a pressing issue to the Christian conscience.

The foregoing may do as a statement, at least in outline, of the traditional doctrine on war in the form and with the modifications given it by the authority of the Church today. It is not particularly difficult to make this sort of statement. The difficulty chiefly begins after the statement has been made. Not that objections are raised, at least not in Catholic circles, against the doctrine itself as stated. What is queried is the usefulness of the doctrine, its relevance to the concrete actualities

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Allocution to the Sixth International Congress of Penal Law, Oct. 3, 1953; CATHOLIC MIND 52 (1954) 110.

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of our historical moment. I shall conclude with some comments on this issue.

## Usefulness of the Doctrine

I think that the tendency to query the uses of the Catholic doctrine on war initially rises from the fact that it has for so long not been used, even by Catholics. That is, it has not been made the basis for a sound critique of public policies and as a means for the formation of a right public opinion. The classic example, of course, was the policy of "unconditional surrender" during the last war. This policy clearly violated the requirement of the "right intention" that has always been a principle in the traditional doctrine of war. Yet no sustained criticism was made of the policy by Catholic spokesmen. Nor was any substantial effort made to clarify by moral judgment the thickening mood of savage violence that made possible the atrocities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I think it is true to say that the traditional doctrine was irrelevant during World War II. This is no argument against the traditional doctrine. The Ten Commandments do not lose their imperative relevance by reason of the fact that they are violated. But there is place for an indictment of all of us who failed to make the tradition relevant.

The initial relevance of the traditional doctrine today lies in its value as the solvent of false dilemmas. Our fragmentized culture seems to be the native soil of this fallacious and dangerous type of thinking.

There are, first of all, the two extreme positions, a soft sentimental pacifism and a cynical hard realism. Both of these views, which are also "feelings," are formative factors in the moral climate of the moment. Both of them are condemned by the traditional doctrine as false and pernicious. The problem is to refute by argument the false antinomy between war and morality that they assert in common, though in different ways. The further and more difficult problem is to purify the public climate of the miasma that emanates from each of them and tends to smother the public conscience.

A second false dilemma has threatened to dominate the argument on national defense in Germany. It sloganized itself thus: "Lieber rot als tot." It has made the same threat in England, where it has been developed in a symposium by twenty-three distinguished Englishmen entitled, The Fearful Choice: A Debate on Nuclear Policy. The choice, of course, is between the desperate alternatives, either universal atomic death or complete surrender to communism. The Catholic mind, schooled in the traditional doctrine of war and peace, rejects the dangerous fallacy involved in this casting up of desperate alternatives. Hidden beneath the fallacy is an abdication of the moral reason and a craven submission to some manner of technological or historical determinism.

It is not, of course, that the traditional doctrine rejects the extreme re

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alternatives as possibilities. Anything in history is possible. Moreover, on grounds of the moral principle of proportion the doctrine supports the grave recommendation of the greatest theorist of war in modern times, von Klausewitz: "We must therefore familiarize ourselves with the thought of an honorable defeat." Conversely, the doctrine condemns the hysteria that swept Washington in August when the Senate voted, eighty-two to two, to deny government funds to any person or institution who ever proposes or actually conducts any study regarding the "surrender of the government of the U.S." "Losing," said von Klausewitz, "is a function of winning," thus stating in his own military idiom the moral calculus prescribed by traditional moral doctrine.

The moralist agrees with the military theorist that the essence of a military situation is uncertainty. And when he requires, with Pius XII, a solid probability of success as a moral ground for a legitimate use of arms, he must reckon with the possibility of failure and be prepared to accept it. But this is a moral decision, worthy of a man and of a civilized nation. It is a free, morally motivated, and responsible act, and therefore it inflicts no stigma of dishonor. It is not that "weary resignation," condemned by Pius XII in his 1948 Christmas Message, which is basic to the inner attitude of the theorists of the desperate alternatives, no matter which one they argue for or accept.

On the contrary, the single inner attitude which is nourished by the traditional doctrine is a will to peace, which, in the extremity, bears within itself a will to enforce the precept of peace by arms. But this will to arms is a moral will; for it is identically a will to justice. It is formed under the judgment of reason. And the first alternative contemplated by reason, as it forms the will to justice through the use of force, is not the possibility of surrender, which would mean the victory of injustice. This is the ultimate extremity, beyond even the extremity of war itself. Similarly, the contrary alternative considered by reason is not a general annihilation, even of the enemy. This would be worse than injustice; it would be sheer folly. In a word, a debate on nuclear policy that is guided by the traditional doctrine of war does not move between the desperate alternatives of surrender or annihilation. If it means simply an honorable defeat, surrender may be morally tolerable; but it is not to be tolerated save on a reasonable calculus of proportionate moral costs. In contrast, annihilation is on every count morally intolerable; it is to be averted at all costs, that is, at the cost of every effort, in every field, that the spirit of man can put forth.

Precisely here the proximate and practical value, use, and relevance of the traditional doctrine begin to appear. Its remote value may lie in its service as a standard of casuistry on various kinds of war. Its remote value certainly lies in its power to

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form the public conscience and to clarify the climate of moral opinion in the midst of today's international conflict. But its proximate value is felt at the crucial point where the moral and political orders meet. Primarily, its value resides in its capacity to set the right terms for rational debate on public policies bearing on the problem of war and peace in this age, characterized by international conflict and by advanced technology. This is no mean value, if you consider the damage that is being presently done by argument carried on in the wrong terms.

The traditional doctrine disqualifies as irrelevant and dangerous the false dilemmas of which I have spoken. It also rejects the notion that the big problem is to "abolish war" or "ban the bomb." It is true that the traditional doctrine on war looks forward to its own disappearance as a chapter in Catholic moral theology. The effort of the moral reason to fit the use of violence into the objective order of justice is paradoxical enough; but the paradox is heightened when this effort takes place at the interior of the Christian religion of love. In any case, the principles of the doctrine themselves make clear that our historical moment is not destined to see a moral doctrine of war discarded as unnecessary. War is still the possibility, not to be exorcised even by prayer and fasting. The Church does not look immediately to the abolition of war. Her doctrine still seeks to fulfil its triple traditional function; to condemn war as evil, to limit the evils it entails, and to humanize its conduct as far as possible.

# Terms for Argument

In the light of the traditional doctrine and in the no less necessary light of the facts of international life and technological development today, what are the right terms for argument on public policy? These are readily reached by a dialectical process, an alternation between principle and fact. The doctrine asserts, in principle, that force is still the ultima ratio in human affairs, and that its use in extreme circumstances may be morally obligatory ad repellendam iniuriam. The facts assert that today this ultima ratio takes the form of nuclear force. whose use remains possible and may prove to be necessary, lest a free field be granted to brutal violence and lack of conscience. The doctrine asserts that the use of nuclear force must be limited, the principle of limitation being the exigencies of legitimate defense against injustice. Thus the terms of public debate are set in two words, "limited war." All other terms of argument are fanciful or fallacious.

I shall not attempt to construct the debate itself. But two points may be made. First, there are those who say that the limitation of nuclear war, or any war, is today impossible, for a variety of reasons—technical, political, etc. In the face of this position, the traditional doctrine simply asserts again, "The problem today is limited war." But notice ne

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that the assertion is on a higher plane than that of sheer fact. It is a moral proposition, or better, a moral imperative. In other words, since nuclear war may be a necessity, it must be made a possibility. Its possibility must be created. And the creation of its possibility requires a work of intelligence, and the development of manifold action, on a whole series of policy levelspolitical (foreign and domestic), diplomatic, military, technological, scientific, fiscal, etc., with the important inclusion of the levels of public opinion and public education. To say that the possibility of limited war cannot be created by intelligence and energy, under the direction of a moral imperative, is to succumb to some sort of determinism in human affairs.

My second point is that the problem of limited war would seem to require solution in two stages. One stage consists in the construction of a sort of "model" of the limited war. This is largely a problem in conceptual analysis. Its value consists in making clear the requirements of limited war in terms of policy on various levels. Notably it makes clear that a right order must prevail among policies. It makes clear, for instance, that the limitation of war becomes difficult or impossible if fiscal policy assumes the primacy over armament policy, or if armament policy assumes the primacy over military policy, or if military policy assumes the primacy over foreign policy in the political sense.

The second stage is even more

difficult. It centers on a quaestio facti. The fact is that the international conflict, in its ideological as in its power dimension, comes to concrete expression in certain localized situations, each of which has its own peculiarities. The question then is, where and under what circumstances is the irruption of violence possible or likely, and how is the limitation of the conflict to be effected in these circumstances, under regard of political intentions, as controlling of military necessities in situ.

The answer to this question is what is meant by the formulation of policy. Policy is the hand of the practical reason set firmly upon the course of events. Policy is what a nation does in this or that given situation. In the concreteness of policy, therefore, the assertion of the possibility of limited war is finally made, and made good. Policy is the meeting-place of the world of power and the world of morality, in which there takes place the concrete reconciliation of the duty of success that rests upon the statesman and the duty of justice that rests upon the civilized nation that he serves.

I am thus led to one final comment on the problem of war. It may be that the classical doctrine of war needs more theoretical elaboration in order to relate it more effectively to the unique conflict that agitates the world today, in contrast with the older historical conflicts upon which the traditional doctrine sought to bear, and by which in turn it was shaped.

In any case, another work of the reflective intelligence and study is even more badly needed. I shall call it a politico-moral analysis of the divergent and particular conflict-situations that have arisen or are likely to arise in the international scene as problems in themselves and as manifestations of the underlying crisis of our times. It is in these particular situations that war actually becomes a problem. It is in the midst of their dense materiality that the quaestio iuris finally rises.

To answer it is the function of the moralist, the professional or the citizen moralist. His answer will never be more than an act of prudence, a practical judgment informed by principle. But he can give no answer at all to the quaestio iuris until the quaestio facti has been answered. From the point of view of the problem of war and morality the same need appears that has been descried elsewhere in what concerns the more general problem of politics and morality. I mean the need of a far more vigorous cultivation of politico-moral science, with close attention to the enormous impact of technological developments on the moral as well as the political order.

The whole concept of force has undergone a rapid and radical transformation, right in the midst of history's most acute political crisis. One consequence of these two related developments was emphasized by Panel Two, "International Security: The Military Aspect," of the Special Studies Project of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund: "The over-all United

States strategic concept lags behind developments in technology and in the world political situation." This vacuum of military doctrine greatly troubled the members of the panel.

But I know from my own association with the Special Studies Project that they were even more troubled by another vacuum in contemporary thought, scil., the absence of an over-all political-moral doctrine with regard to the uses of force. This higher doctrine is needed to give moral sense and political direction to a master strategic concept. "Power without a sense of direction," they said, "may drain life of its meaning, if it does not destroy humanity altogether." This sense of direction cannot be found in technology; of itself, technology tends toward the exploitation of scientific possibilities simply because they are possibilities.

Power can be invested with a sense of direction only by moral principles. It is the function of morality to command the use of power, to forbid it, to limit it; or, more in general, to define the ends for which power may or must be used and to judge the circumstances of its use. But moral principles cannot effectively impart this sense of direction to power until they have first, as it were, passed through the order of politics; that is, until they have first become incarnate in public policy. It is public policy in all its varied concretions that must be "moralized" (to use an abused word in its good sense). This is the primary need of the moment. For my part, I am not confident that it is being met.